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Professionalism and Effectiveness: A Grounded Theory Study of Teachers' Perceptions

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PROFESSIONALISM AND EFFECTIVENESS:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

The professionalism of teachers in the United States is frequently linked to

their effectiveness in the classroom and ultimately to the quality of educational

experiences afforded American students. The assumption of such a relationship

underlies recommendations made by prestigious organizations for improving the

quality of teaching and identifying a direction for improved teacher preparation in

reports such as *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986) and *Tomorrow's Schools* (1991) by the

Holmes' Group and *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) by the

Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986). In their studies of teaching

and teacher education, leaders in educational research often imply a link between

professionalism of teachers and effective teaching (Corwin, 1975; Darling-Hammond,

1990, 1985; Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993). In addition, recognition of the

importance of professionalism as it relates to professional status and its achievement

can be identified as a primary force behind the movement toward development of

national certification for teachers (Wise and Liebbrand, 1993). In sum, much

educational literature on this topic indicates that "the professionalism of teaching

[constitutes] a major dilemma for educators [and] is also a critical issue in the reform

of American education" (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993, p. 19). Largely unaccounted for in this impressive collection of sources, however, are explorations into how teachers themselves identify, and more importantly, believe they demonstrate, this perceived relationship between professionalism and effectiveness in their own teaching. As a result, this relationship is widely acknowledged, but largely unsubstantiated.

Use of the term *profession* itself accounts at least in part for this lack of clarity since it is particularly troublesome to define. It is often applied indeterminately to describe any number of occupations in order to make them appear more desirable for reasons such as granting increased occupational status and credibility to individual practitioners. "The underlying problem is that for many writers, calling something a profession makes it one" (Abbott, 1988, p. 8). The same might be said for the term *professionalism* when used to characterize individual behavior. It is not uncommon to refer to the professionalism of basketball players or to that of physicians or lawyers with little to differentiate observations concerning certain behavioral characteristics on the part of individual "practitioners."

When applying *profession* and *professionalism* to teaching, difficulty with the indeterminate use of both terms is further compounded. Teaching is accorded only "quasi-professional status" (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993, p. 19) by social analysts and the public as well. As a result, discussions regarding teaching as a profession and the professionalism of teachers typically evolve into arguments supporting changes in national and local policies to achieve such goals as increased

respect for teachers, justification of salary increases, or support of broadened parameters for autonomy in decision making. Such efforts may be laudable, and, in most cases, justifiable. However, there are also those who would agree with Larabee (1992) that rationalizing the social position of teaching as a profession is merely a self-serving exercise by the host of experts making such arguments in order to improve their own status in the wider university community of which they are a part. Explorations of professionalism as "shared experiences between professionals and clients, professionals and knowledge, professionals and colleagues, and professionals and the public which ultimately grants symbolic authority to a profession" (Dempsey, 1991, p. 5) fail to appear regularly in such debates.

The identification and measurement of effective teaching is no less troublesome in attempting to illustrate the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness. Research on teaching has undergone tremendous change since the early 1950s and has continued to evolve through successive decades. As summarized by Shavelson, et. al. (1986, pp. 50-51), it encompasses "studies of teacher planning, classroom processes, teaching outcomes, and the multi-level contexts that form the environment for teaching (e.g., classrooms, schools)" and has resulted in scales of measurement, in potentially generalizable theories regarding best practices in the classroom, and most recently in research on teachers' thoughts, judgments, and decisions. Analysis of teaching is replete with multiple models, each of which must be studied on its own terms to understand its unique contribution to a knowledge base for teacher effectiveness (Shulman, 1986). Little, if any, attention has been given by

studies of teaching as a profession to how any relationship between such insights from investigation of the multiple models of effectiveness might give substance to the understanding and practice of teacher professionalism.

It appears, therefore, that ambivalence surrounding even the most basic issues of the meaning and application of the terms *professionalism* and *effectiveness* constrain efforts to substantiate the supposed relationship between them. Without further investigation into the nature of this relationship, the role invoked for professionalism in educational reform could well be regarded by thoughtful critics as having little basis in fact. Close scrutiny of professionalism could lead to the conclusion that it is yet another "cultural myth" in teaching, an ideal image used to justify and measure thoughts and activities related to quality of teaching and teacher education (Britzman, 1986) but bearing little or questionable resemblance at best to actual practice. Such myths, or ideal images, arise from what Britzman and other critical theorists consider to be a skewed version of the reality of teaching, resulting from the fact that:

> [t]he mass experience of compulsory education has made teaching one of the most socially familiar professions in the United States. We have all played a role opposite teachers for a large part of our lives. It is taken for granted that we all know what a teacher is and does...All this contributes to well-worn and commonsensical images of the teacher's work... . (Britzman, 1986, p. 443)

The Problem

This study sought to determine how practicing teachers explained the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness with respect to their own

teaching. It shifted consideration of the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness from the "commonsensical" to the theoretical by reaching beyond the unsubstantiated rhetoric of conclusions such as those cited thus far regarding this supposed relationship to establish a narrative of inquiry about professionalism and effectiveness from the teachers' perspective (Shulman, 1992). In so doing, this investigation followed the trend of the most recent model of research on teaching by exploring teachers' thinking regarding the meaning of professionalism, the application of that meaning in their practice, and ultimately, the correlation they made between such meaning and their own effectiveness in the classroom.

Purpose and Scope of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to demonstrate the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness by using the personal observations of a sample of award-winning teachers regarding their understanding and practice of professionalism and their own effectiveness in the classroom. Methods appropriate to interpretive research, and in particular to grounded theory analysis, were used to collect and examine transcripts of semi-structured interviews of 15 elementary teachers from the Chicago area. In order to assure, insofar as was possible, that the study participants could be regarded as effective teachers, the sample was composed of randomly selected recipients of the same award presented over the most recent five-year period by a local foundation for excellence in classroom teaching.

The same interview schedule was used for all the interviews. It was developed by the researcher and field tested with four elementary teachers as interviewees and

later as participants in a discussion group designed to substantiate the validity and reliability of the interview questions. The data accumulated from the field test were not incorporated into the actual study. While the participants in the test were not award-winning teachers, they were randomly selected from recommendations by local school administrators and had all been identified at various times in their careers and through various means as particularly effective in their classrooms. They were each made generally familiar with the research methodology of the study prior to their interviews.

Interviews with study participants were conducted by the researcher herself at a time and location chosen by each participant; interviews were completed within a four-month period. Audiotapes of the interviews were reproduced as verbatim transcripts by the researcher.

Additional questions addressed by the research included:

1. What characteristics, common to the traditional professions, were identified by the participants in their understanding of professionalism?

2. What unique characteristics, not typically identified in sociological and educational literature, were attributed to the professionalism of teachers by the participants?

3. What criteria did the participants use in order to perceive themselves as effective teachers?

Limitations of the Study

This study drew conclusions based only on the specific sample of award-winning elementary teachers interviewed. However, the study did not attempt to analyze what impact, if any, the winning of an award had on the teachers' perceptions of their professionalism or on their effectiveness, although it is acknowledged that winning an award could indeed exert some influence on the teacher's responses to particular questions. The assumption that some degree of effectiveness was already notable in each participant prior to winning the award balanced that concern and provided reasonable assurance of the validity of participant responses, particularly regarding their own effectiveness. If it had any effect at all, the award was presumed to have strengthened the effective teaching of the study participants. In addition, the study sample was restricted to elementary teachers, i.e., pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, in keeping with the scope of the discussion on teaching as a profession and teacher professionalism in the majority of the literature.

Terminology

The purpose of the study included identification of the meaning of professionalism and effectiveness from the perspective of the participants. However, recognizing the wide variation among authors in how the following terms are used, the context in which the researcher applied these and several other terms central to the study are clarified below:

1.   A profession is an "exclusive occupational group applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases" (Abbott, 1988, p. 8).

2.   <u>Professionalism</u> as a general concept refers to characteristic behavior of members of a profession, or <u>professionals</u>.

3.   <u>Professionalization</u> "involves those efforts of an organized profession to meet the criteria which characterize the ideal type of profession or, in the case of an established profession, to maintain or even improve its privileged position" (Hoyle, 1980, p. 43).

5.   <u>Professional status</u> is the value-laden, public recognition accorded members of a profession.

6.   <u>Effectiveness</u> is the ability to facilitate achievement of an intended outcome.

<div align="center">

<u>Summary</u>

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Much of the literature on teaching as a profession seems to indicate a relationship between teacher professionalism and teacher effectiveness. However, even the most basic inquiry into the meaning of the terms *profession, professionalism* and *effectiveness* reveals difficulties in grasping not only their definition, but how they are related in practice. The meaning of the terms as well as an understanding of their relationship is seldom studied from the perspective of teachers themselves. Therefore, this study sought to determine how one sample of teachers understood the meaning of professionalism, characterized their own effectiveness in teaching, and, finally, explained the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness with respect to their teaching.

In Chapter II, a review of relevant literature provides additional background for the reader regarding an understanding of professions and professionalism from a sociological viewpoint as well as supplies greater detail on issues associated with professionalization of teaching and research on teacher effectiveness. Chapter III specifies the research methodology, developing a case for use of interpretive research methods and grounded theory analysis in this particular study. Chapter IV presents an analysis of the data derived from interviews of all 15 participants and integrates that analysis into a theoretical framework which sheds light on the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness. Chapter V draws conclusions from the study and makes recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a discussion of relevant literature used by the researcher to: (1) examine the meaning of profession and professionalism from a sociological perspective; (2) analyze references to professionalization and professionalism in education literature; and (3) identify key concepts from research on teaching that relate to the research questions guiding this study.

The Sociological Perspective

Toward a Concept of Profession

> Problems of definition in social research can often be seen as a version of the old philosophical problem of universals. They are based on much the same question, namely, what empirical reality do general terms describe? One familiar resolution of this problem was put forward by Plato. The quest for a watertight definition of a profession seems to be based on the same premises [sic] as Plato's solution to the philosophical problem. It is a quest for an empirical ideal which can only exist in a Platonic heaven. (Elliott, 1972, p. 4)

Elliott's comment provides some explanation as to why the most preliminary investigation into the meaning and identification of profession by sociologists quickly reveals a lack of consensus among them (Elliott, 1972; Friedson, 1988). Even the working definition of profession selected for this study (see p. 7) from Abbott's examination of The System of Professions (1988) is described by the author himself

as a loose definition: "professions are exclusive occupational groups applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases" (p. 8). Anyone attempting to determine a meaning for profession is not without a wide variety of definitions from which to choose.

In an effort to bring some method to the difficult task of reflecting on the meaning of profession, Armstrong (1985) accounts for variation among definitions by correlating their differences to development and change in sociological theory and research. In her study of strategies used by clinical dietetics and nurse anesthesia for staking out occupational turf, she organizes the evolution of theorizing about profession into three approaches reflecting particular phases in the development of sociological thought. Her categorization will be used to provide a framework for this study. Further on in the chapter it will become apparent that approaches taken to the discussion of profession in educational literature are frequently the same as those identified by Armstrong.

The Attribute Approach

The most easily recognizable method for conceptualizing professions is the attribute approach or trait model characterized by lists of attributes claimed to represent the common core of those occupations that can be considered professions (Johnson, 1972). This approach arose from what is referred to in sociology as functionalism, "a theoretical approach to sociological analysis...[which] tends to focus more on social equilibrium than on social change, and the component elements of a

given society are consequently analyzed in terms of their specific function in system maintenance" (Encyclopedia of Sociology, 1974).

In simplest terms, proponents of the attribute approach develop lists of traits gleaned from the study of various "professional" occupations. Those occupations corresponding most closely to the attributes are ranked highest in the social form known as profession.

> Sociologists working from [the functionalist] tradition have been
> inspired to detail the social structure of professions [which] gave rise to
> the practice of compiling lists of 'professional attributes,' and
> measuring various occupations' 'degree of professionalism' against an
> 'objective scale.' The implied task of aspiring occupations was to
> evolve toward this 'higher order,' i.e., to take on the attributes of
> professionalism without threatening the power and prerogatives of
> already recognized professions. (Armstrong, 1985, pp.1-2)

Evolution of the attribute approach in the United States began with the famous study "Is Social Work a Profession?" by Abraham Flexner (1915) in which he attempted to describe profession by developing a list of its defining attributes. The six traits subsequently identified by Flexner have since served as a model for attribute lists generated by theorists working within this tradition. He summarized his listing of "objective" attributes by stating that professions involved essentially intellectual operations with large individual responsibility; they derived their raw material from science and learning which developed to a practical and definite end; they possessed technique(s) able to be communicated educationally; they tended to organize themselves; and they were motivated by altruistic ends.

Since Flexner's time numerous authors have developed many attribute lists that include multiple and varied characteristics in their efforts to define profession. Millerson (1964) identified at least 23 such characteristics or "elements," in a summary of the work of authors who attempted to define profession in this manner. The most frequently mentioned of these traits, not very different from those elucidated by Flexner and found in some form in all attribute lists, include: "(1) skill based on theoretical knowledge; (2) the provision of training and education; (3) testing the competence of members; (4) organization; (5) adherence to a professional code of conduct; and (6) altruistic service" (Johnson, 1972, p. 23).

As demonstrated later in this chapter, many discussions of teaching as a profession utilize variations of the attribute approach in attempting to identify the degree to which teaching has professionalized. However, even though reference to and use of the attribute approach in the study of professions is not uncommon in sociological literature (Armstrong, 1985, p. 2), it has fallen into relative disuse, and to some degree, disrespect, in sociological circles (Abbott, 1988; Armstrong, 1985; Friedson, 1988; Houle, 1980).

One of the principal reasons for this apparent repudiation is the concern by many sociologists that the development of trait lists assumes the existence of "true" or ideal professions in reality. Accordingly, traits or attributes taken as a whole form models against which all other occupations can be measured for the degree to which they have achieved the status of profession (Armstrong, 1985, Johnson, 1972). The resulting lists are subsequently criticized for lack of a true theoretical framework.

Some sociologists go so far as to claim that the attribute approach is an atheoretical technique because the attributes or traits are usually derived through "the error of accepting the professionals' own definitions of themselves" (Johnson, 1972, p. 25) rather than grounded in a well-established conceptual framework.   Further difficulty also arises from the fact that the attribute approach is both ahistorical and asocial, failing to integrate into the indentification of attributes the historical development or the social process through which occupations develop specific identities.

The Professional Dominance Approach

Abbott (1988) and Armstrong (1985) both credit Elliott Friedson with responsibility for identifying "professional dominance" as a distinct sociological approach to the study of professions. Friedson (1970) contends that "the true mark of a profession is *autonomy*--its ability to control the content and terms of its work, and to organize, control, and dominate the work of others in the division of labor" (Armstrong, 1985, p. 23). In making such a claim, Friedson moves beyond identifying autonomy as a trait among others and gives it the status of a distinguishing mark of a true profession. Friedson sees autonomy and the political activity which results from the control that professions wield in society as both a necessary and sufficient cause for an occupational group claiming true professional status. Dietrich Rueschemeyer (1983) offers this account of professional autonomy:

> Individually and, in association, collectively, the professions 'strike a bargain with society' in which they exchange competence and integrity against the trust of client and community, relative freedom from lay

supervision and interference, protection against unqualified competition
as well as substantial remuneration and higher social status. As
guarantees of this self-control they point to careful recruitment and
training, formal organisation [sic] and informal relations among
colleagues, codes of ethics, and professional courts or committees
enforcing these codes. (p.41)

In his later work Friedson (1988) further develops the concept of autonomy by
relating it to the institutionalization of formal knowledge and the exercise of control
by particular groups in society which maintain claims to such knowledge. Formal
knowledge is knowledge that is specialized, rationalized, and formalized into theories
and other abstractions typically shared among and by particular groups of people
shaped by the social division of labor in a society (Friedson, 1988). "By definition,
formal knowledge is not part of everyday knowledge. This means that it is elite
knowledge. And insofar as it is used to direct human enterprises, decision making on
its basis is not democratic, not open to active participation of all" (Friedson, 1988,
pp. 4-5). The maintenance and application of particularized formal knowledge thus
becomes the responsibility of the professions in society, those specialized groups
whose roles are formed around the control and application of particular kinds of
formal knowledge. The autonomy of these occupational groups arises from their
ability to exercise control related to specific domains of this knowledge.

In a related analysis of the autonomy of professions, Abbott (1988) determines
that jurisdiction rather than dominance is the most important exclusive property of a
profession:

In claiming jurisdiction, a profession asks society to recognize its
cognitive structure through exclusive rights; jurisdiction has not only a

culture, but also a social structure. These claimed rights may include absolute monopoly of practice and of public payments, rights of self-discipline and of unconstrained employment, control of professional training, of recruitment, and of licensing, to mention only a few. Which of them are actually claimed depends in part on the audience...The claims also depend on the profession's own desires; not all professions aim for domination of practice in all their jurisdictions. (p. 59)

Friedson, Abbott and others who espouse the dominance and/or jurisdiction approach to the identification of profession are also not without their critics. Just as in the case of attribute theory, critics of the dominance and/or jurisdiction approach contend that dominance advocates fail to account for how the development of professions is tied to historical or social conditions (Armstrong, 1985; LaDuca and Engel, 1994). In addition, critics of the dominance approach also claim that the formal knowledge exercised by professions may not be held in equal value by all segments of society and thus the "profession will not embody or apply values which are of equal relevance to all, and the values and organisation [sic] of that profession will vary in their consequences for different class or status groups" (Johnson, 1972, p. 34). Therefore, the profession could not claim either universal autonomy, dominance or jurisdiction since instances exist where it has not been endowed with that ability.

The Process/Structural Approach

Neither the attribute nor the professional dominance approach adequately addresses the historical or social forces at work in the evolution of how certain occupations come to be regarded as professions. Armstrong uses the term

process/structural approach to identify attempts to fill this void made by various

theorists such as Bucher and Strauss (1961) and Hughes (1963) whose work ushered

in a new perspective on the emergence and development of professions. She

characterizes this approach as an amalgam of various methodologies which include

"sociological works focus[ing] on the interactive and interdependent relationship

between occupations and their environments" (Armstrong, 1985, p. 27). Various

works which can be classified as belonging to the process/structural approach

examine how identification of professions is "transformed episodically and reflexively

by the nature of [their] referents and the contemporaneous intellectual, political,

economic, and social context" (Kimball, 1992, p. 17) in which they exist.

An example of a process/structural perspective is the theory of professions

summarized by LaDuca and Engel (1994). In their judgment, the essential

components required for such a theory show the profound influence of context in the

professionalization of occupations. In their conceptualization, the following elements

are necessary for a theory of professions:

1. A model of the professional's ecology involving recognition of the fact that professions ultimately are social in nature and even the special knowledge they claim is socially defined and rationalized through situations and activities;

2. A model of the professional's cognition including not only claims of special knowledge but also particular modes of thinking that are complex and esoteric;

3. A model of the relationship between ecology and cognition incorporating the social character of professions as what a professional needs to know and do as a function of the situations in which the professional is expected to perform. (pp. 9-10)

Thus, a process/structural theory such as that proposed by LaDuca and Engel emphasizes that professions are contextual, relational, and situational. According to this approach, characteristics of professions are formed by their unique contexts, not as separately identifiable constructs.

Another example of a process/structural approach can be found in Kimball's historical analysis, The "True Professional Ideal" in America (1992). In this extensive study, Kimball traces the history of theology, law, medicine, and education in the United States through an analysis of the rhetoric of professionalism which surrounded them, the nature and status of vocations to these fields, and the cultural ideals and values associated with each of them. The "ecology" he chooses is the historical context in which these particular vocations professionalized in order to provide insight into how the experience of each has informed the meaning and status attributed to professions in the United States.

<div align="center">Critiquing the Concept of Profession</div>

While a number of varying approaches may be taken to conceptualize the meaning of profession, the fact is eminently clear that society, for a variety of reasons, has developed a type of rank ordering of occupations. At the top of the order are those occupations with the special status attributed to what are designated as professions. Much effort has been made to study them. However, any analysis of the study of professions would be incomplete without some reference to the serious proponents of deprofessionalization. Hoyle (1980) summarizes the arguments of these critics thus:

1.   the functions of practitioners are no more crucial to the well-being of members of society than those of many other occupations;

2.   the skills required, and particularly the need for a systematic body of knowledge, have been greatly exaggerated by the protagonists of professionalization;

3.   the values of the professions are no less self-interested than those of other occupations;

4.   the autonomy claimed for the profession as a whole, and for individual practitioners, is unnecessary and is proposed only as a means of avoiding accountability to society in general and to individual clients in particular;

5.   the high prestige and rewards enjoyed by the professions have not been bestowed by a grateful society but have been acquired by the professions through the exercise of power and influence. (p. 46)

In the face of such criticism it is important then to ask why the question of whether or not they are a profession still "remains of central and practical concern for dozens of occupational groups who are preoccupied with joining the ranks of the already established professions" (Soder, 1990, p. 35). Sykes (1989) seems not only to have a fitting answer for this question, but also provides an appropriate segue for an analysis of how the issue of professional identity in particular is treated by those who ponder the professionalization and professionalism of teaching:

> Professionalism weaves into a strong braid of ideology our political culture's most potent values. The scientific and technological base of professional practice provides ground for the mystery and efficacy of expertise. Status and wealth accrue to professionals yet the service ideal provides an altruistic motive for their work. Access to the professions is achieved through a public educational system; all may apply, many may be chosen, merit and effort make the difference. Professionals work in organizations and in solo practice, but enjoy considerable autonomy. Expertise is shared within a community, but practice has a strong individual component. Indeed, individualism is an enduring theme in American culture. Self-reliance, that Emersonian

virtue, and its cultivation in good judgment are hallmarks of
professional work.

That teachers and many other human service workers seek the
professional mantle is no surprise. How irresistible is an occupation
swathed in science, altruism, democracy, and individualism that pays
well to boot. So powerful is the lure of professionalism and so limited
the alternatives that occupations in pursuit of status, income,
autonomy, and competence will naturally seek to professionalize.
(p. 254)

The Educational Perspective

Difficulties in defining profession already noted through a review of

sociological theory are amplified even further in discussions of teaching as a

profession. "Although it is clear that teachers consistently have claimed membership

in the class of 'profession' (as opposed to the apparently less exalted class of 'trade,'

'vocation,' or 'occupation'), less clear is what membership might imply" (Soder,

1990, p. 38). Such ambiguity, however, does not stop those who theorize about

teaching from unabashed efforts to speculate about its meaning and to pursue

professional status (Dempsey, 1991).

The purpose of this section is neither to define teaching as a profession nor is

it to argue in support of or in opposition to increased professionalization for teachers.

Rather, this review examines several historical and sociological accounts of teaching

as well as writing in pertinent educational policy analysis which reveals a

characterization of teaching as the "not quite profession" (Goodlad, 1990, p. 71).

From this analysis it seems fair to conclude that Goodlad's portrayal is the basis upon

which most of the recommendations found in pertinent literature concerning teaching

as a profession are made. The impression that professionalization and

professionalism are clearly regarded as worthy goals by so many was precisely what

prompted this researcher to pursue her investigation.

<div align="center">The History of Teaching and Teacher Education</div>

In the first sentence of <u>And Sadly Teach</u>, an extensive history of teacher

education in the United States, Jurgen Herbst (1989) leaves no doubt as to his bias

regarding the stature of teaching as a "not quite" profession: "Teaching has not fared

well in the United States" (p. 3). Further in the introduction he uses the attribute

approach to interpret those areas where teaching typically fails to meet criteria of

"true" professionalism:

> Classroom teachers do not receive their professional training in a
> graduate school of education as lawyers do in law school or physicians
> in a medical school. Bureaucratic commands and guidelines
> compromise the teacher's autonomy in the classroom. There is no
> code of ethics to define professional probity and, despite the often
> heard complaints about unfair administrative practices, few teacher
> unions have demanded or endorsed peer evaluation. A teacher's
> responsibilities toward students are diluted with obligations toward the
> students' parents, toward administrative supervisors, and toward an
> employing school board. And...the most discouraging aspect of all,
> outstanding classroom teachers cannot reach positions of highest
> prestige, responsibility, and reward in the classroom. To advance
> professionally they must leave the classroom for the administrator's or
> specialist's office. (p. 7)

Herbst's history of teacher education constitutes a vehicle for proving how this

"sad" condition of teaching is the result of a movement within graduate departments

of education to concentrate energies on "the more prestigious tasks of training

specialists and administrators" (p. 11) rather than on empowering classroom

practitioners. In a later chapter, "Professionalization: The Betrayal of the Teacher"

(p. 161), he characterizes a particular phase in the history of teacher education, beginning in the late 1800s and reaching its peak with the Carnegie Foundation's 1914 report on the state of teacher education, as that which solidified the general disregard with which teaching has been held by the public. In point of fact, his entire presentation of the history of teacher education embodies a certain inherent value assumption (Hoyle, 1980) that teaching does "not quite" fit the conception of profession. For Herbst, the reform of education in the United States is dependent upon the degree to which teachers can operate within a professional environment characterized by "the education, the competence, the autonomy, and the collegial authority that sees them as colleagues of their administrative fellow professionals" (p. 197).

Herbst is not the only author to utilize an historical perspective to underscore the less than desirable professional status of teaching and to call for its improvement within the framework of overall educational reform. Goodlad (1990) uses his description of the "not quite profession" to preface his analysis of the sorry state of teacher education in the U.S. While he does not provide the same broad historical analysis of teaching as Herbst, Goodlad notes through research specifically on the history of teacher education programs that "[t]he education of teachers commonly ranks low, and it is often shunted off to adjunct, part-time, temporary, nontenured instructors. Teacher education is a neglected cousin once again, but at least shares a corner of the same living quarters and is thus not easily put out of sight" (p. 75). It follows that the products of these programs, the "not quite" professional teachers, are

also "neglected cousins" in the world of professionalism. In much the same vein, it has been noted that "[e]arly twentieth century adjurations to teachers (and to those involved in the training of teachers) reveal two recurring themes: (1) a sense of already being a bit off the mark in the status drive and (2) a desire to consider teachers as at least potential candidates for membership in the inner circles of the 'real' professions" (Soder 1990, p. 36).

Evidence thus supports the historical fact of a less-than-successful movement toward professionalization of teaching throughout its history. While disagreements may exist among scholars as to the reasons for this struggle, it is largely uncontested that at no time in U.S. history has teaching been accorded full professional recognition, however one understands profession. At the same time, these historical accounts imply that the trend toward professionalization ultimately will lead to the improvement not only of teaching, but of the entire educational enterprise.

<div align="center">The Sociology of Teaching</div>

Consistent with their historical counterparts, sociological studies of teaching also characterize it as the "not quite" profession. Both Willard Waller's and Dan Lortie's classic works support the contention that a shadow exists over efforts to professionalize teaching (Sykes, 1989).

Waller's study The Sociology of Teaching (1961) was not directed toward teachers *per se* but rather, toward the experience of schooling. However, his comments on determinants of the occupational type can hardly be more direct regarding the status of teachers and the nature of teaching as work:

The social standing of the profession is unfortunately low, and this excludes more capable than incapable persons. Particularly damaging, probably, is the belief that is abroad in the community that only persons incapable of success in other lines become teachers, that teaching is a failure belt, the refuge of 'unsalable men and unmarriageable women.' This belief is the more damaging for the truth that is in it. The nature of the work of teaching, with its overwhelming mass of routine and its few opportunities for free self-expression, may both deter and attract to the ultimate damage of the profession. (p. 379)

Dan Lortie expresses a similar viewpoint more than ten years later in his work Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study (1975). A multifaceted study which involved historical review, national and local surveys, observational studies, and intensive interviews with teachers, Schoolteacher attempted to provide a perspective on teaching from that of teachers themselves. Prior to engaging in an analysis of his extensive data, Lortie summarized the social standing, i.e., professional status, of teachers in the following manner:

The services performed by teachers have usually been seen as above the run of everyday work, and the occupation has had the aura of a special mission honored by society. But social ambiguity has stalked those who undertook the mission, for the real regard shown those who taught has never matched the professed regard. Teaching is a status accorded high respectability of a particular kind; but those occupying it do not receive the level or types of deference reserved for those working in the learned professions, occupying high government office, or demonstrating success in business. (p. 10)

At the completion of his study, Lortie used various attributes of profession as central foci in a description of the eventual changes he predicted in teaching and how such changes would effect the "ethos of the occupation" (p. 215). For example, he projected the increased need for more technical information related to alternatives in

instruction, pointing to the need for "greater adaptability, more effective colleague relationships, and more sharing in issues of knowledge and expertise" (p. 221). In other words, he called for what Flexner identified as increased "intellectual operations with large individual responsibility... raw material [derived] from science and learning...communicated within a self-organized group" (Flexner, 1915, p. 904). Lortie projected increased options for teaching to become "more of" rather than "not quite" a profession. His recommendations for the future indicated the importance he attached to teaching and its impact on the educational system.

<div align="center">Policy Development</div>

Policy is usually regarded as a definite course of action adopted for the sake of expediency such as that adopted and pursued by a government or political party. The body of writing identified in this section reflecting policy development adheres to that meaning. Sources included in this section typically build on either historical or sociological analyses and often employ one or other sociological approach to the study of profession. In keeping with their distinctive policy orientation, they include both general and specific recommendations for how policy related to schools, teacher employment practices, and teacher professional standards as well as university policy related to schools of education and teacher education programs must be changed in order to improve the "not quite" professional status of teaching and teachers. One often finds a correlation between various periods of educational reform in the history of our nation and challenges to improve the professional status of teachers and the

professionalism of teaching. The focus of this section is on such reform in the

contemporary milieu.

Teacher preparation, public policy, and professionalism

In 1976 and later in 1985 with a postscript, the Bicentennial Commission on

Education for the Profession of Teaching of the American Association of Colleges for

Teacher Education published its report entitled Educating a Profession. Its goal was

"to stimulate recognition of teaching as a profession rather than an occupation"

(p. 173). This report includes a thorough analysis of a theoretical basis for the

professionalization of teaching as well as a detailed set of recommendations for

improving its professionalism. The report's authors develop the premise that teaching

is not a mature profession and that it differs significantly in occupational status from

other professions such as medicine and law. While their compilation of

characteristics of "true" professions parallels those attributes previously identified in

this paper, the authors' collection of characteristics of semiprofessions is somewhat

unique for its detailed listing. These criteria of the semiprofessions provide a

summary of the characteristics often implied by other researchers and groups

referring to the "not quite" professional status of teaching (The Holmes Group, 1986;

Rowan, 1994). They include:

1. Lower in occupational status.
2. Shorter training periods.
3. Lack of societal acceptance that the nature of the service
and/or the level of expertise justifies the autonomy
which is granted to the professions.
4. A less specialized and less highly developed body of
knowledge and skills.

5.   Markedly less emphasis on theoretical and conceptual bases for practice.

6.   A tendency for the professional to identify with the employment institution more and with the profession less. (Note that it is not the condition of employment rather than private practice which makes the difference. Rather it is the identity relationship.)

7.   More subject to administrative and supervisory surveillance and control.

8.   Less autonomy in professional decision making with accountability to superiors rather than to the profession.

9.   Management of organizations within which semiprofessionals are employed by persons who have themselves been prepared and served in the semiprofession.

10.   A preponderance of women.

11.   Absence of the right of privileged communication between client and professional.

12.   Little or no involvement in matters of life and death. (Howsam, Corrigan & Denemark, 1985, pp. 8-9)

After establishing the less-than-preferable professional status of teaching, the authors of Educating a Profession made a series of recommendations for the appropriate governance, required curricula, and necessary support of teacher education programs aimed particularly at the colleges and universities which sponsored them. The report also made recommendations for support from both federal and state governments for teacher education and for appropriate quality control by the profession for maintenance of highest possible performance standards.

Following publication of A Nation at Risk by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983, the Bicentennial Commission added a 1985 postscript to its report which reaffirmed its original position and recommendations, offering support for the fact that teaching was a "profession at risk" (p. 179). The

postscript clearly reaffirmed the connection between greater professionalization of

teachers and an improved educational system:

> The nation is at risk when any of its professions is severely weakened.
> Teaching is such a profession, and national study groups do the nation
> harm when they slight the sources of teaching expertise--the research
> and development that undergirds professional knowledge and skills, and
> the professional training that provides the basis for practice. The basis
> for the genuine, sound practice of pedagogy is substantial and growing
> dramatically. If the nation wants to reduce its risk, it must upgrade the
> teaching profession *and* the conditions under which teachers practice.
> The achievement of one goal is inextricably linked to the other.
> (p. 177)

Over the years since publication of Educating a Profession, not much has

changed. In 1985, the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education

called for "change in meeting the vital challenge to improve the preparation of

teachers and to make teaching a more rewarding and desirable profession" (p. VI). In

1986, both the Holmes Group and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the

Economy published reports which critiqued existing teacher preparation programs and

proposed their restructuring to achieve the improvements they recommended. They

also recommended how the career itself could be restructured to appeal to and retain a

talented cohort of teachers. Each group built its recommendations on the premise that

increased professionalization for teachers is an absolute requirement for reform of

American education.

Likewise, individual authors propose the need for increased professionalization

by advocating changes in public policy and improvements in teacher preparation

(Hawley, 1991) which directly parallel those attributes at the core of identification of

profession. Recommendations for recognition of identifiable domains of knowledge specific to teaching (Devaney & Sykes, 1988; Shulman, 1986), appropriate salary structures reflecting professional status (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993), development of teacher leadership (Little, 1988), and, suitable autonomy (Fenstermacher, 1990) and self-governance (Darling-Hammond, 1988) are representative of such writing.

Professional standards

Of particular significance regarding the professionalization of teaching within a policy domain is the current movement toward development of nationally recognized professional standards for teachers (Wise, 1994). As noted earlier through an analysis of sociological approaches to conceptualizing profession, testing the competence of its members is a characteristic attribute of a "true" profession (Johnson, 1972, p. 23). While each of the reports noted in this section have made specific recommendations related to the accreditation of teacher training programs and teacher certification, the recent development and field testing of a national certification system for teachers (Bradley, 1993, 1994) is a particularly cogent example of the perceived relationship between improved professional status for teachers and an anticipated positive impact on schooling. Development of national standards links directly to efforts at making teaching a true profession (Watkins, 1993).

National certification standards for teachers are the result of the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, established in 1987 by a grant

from the Carnegie Corporation in response to the report issued by its task force on the

state of teacher education. Through development of a system paralleling the "true"

professions of medicine and law, the board has developed standards set by

accomplished teachers reflecting best theory and practices in teaching for purposes of

offering credentials to elementary and secondary teachers. The goal of the project is

specifically to "improve the status of the profession" (Watkins, 1993, p. 19) in the

"hopes that [such a] certification system will strengthen teaching and improve student

learning by creating standards that all teachers can strive to meet" (Bradley, 1994,

pp. 19-20).

<div align="center">Critiquing Teaching as a Profession</div>

Increased professionalization of teaching is a goal embraced by many groups

and individuals in pursuit of overall educational reform. However, the previous

summary should not give the impression that support of this goal is broad and

uncompromising among those who study teaching and among teachers themselves.

Not only are there educators who challenge certain aspects of the movement toward

increased professionalization of teaching, but there are those who contest any efforts

whatsoever aimed at identifying teaching as a profession.

<u>Cautionary Voices</u>

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, criticism leveled at the attribute approach

to the study of profession within sociology arises from the fact that listing attributes

proposes a model of profession based on the supposed existence of "true professions,"

notably medicine and law. Among those probing the rhetoric surrounding discussions

of teacher professionalization, the same criticism holds true (Soder, 1990). While these educators strongly support the professionalization of teaching, they firmly believe that the model of profession suggested by either medicine or law fails to provide an appropriate characterization of the work of teaching although teaching is typically held to such a model (Hoyle, 1980; Jackson, 1987; Soder, 1990; Sykes, 1989). The cautionary, and often impatient note sounded by these individuals is captured by Philip Jackson's response to the Holmes Group report (1987):

> While wanting to see a lot more support for teacher education than we have today, I cannot help wondering why we must tie it to the promise of making teachers more and more like doctors. Can we do no better than that in our dreams of what teaching might become? Is our collective imagination so worn out that all we can come up with to impress the public or Congress or whomever is the overused image of a bunch of schoolteachers masquerading as interns? (p. 388)

In the tradition of a process-structural approach to profession, authors who speak with caution regarding professionalization call for teaching to develop its own model of profession arising from the unique context of teacher work. For example, Darling-Hammond (1988) calls for "new and ultimately more productive forms of governance that will allow teachers to practice professionally in the interests of students while preserving our democratic traditions" (p. 76) in her attempt to redefine teacher autonomy in the policy environment within which schools operate. Hoyle (1980) calls for further study on the relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher action to determine the special characteristics of teaching practice. Sykes (1989) reminds us that "[i]mproving the technical adequacy of teaching and enhancing the prospects of the profession via higher standards, better professional education,

and career ladders must be coupled with a broader social vision of teaching and of education" (p. 270). All in all, while supporting professionalization, these cautionary voices remonstrate against unconditional adherence to a traditional professional model for teaching. In a somewhat contradictory manner, they often use as a basis for argument some of the attributes of profession to which teaching, by their own admission, does not adhere.

Dissenting Voices

There are also those who join critics of professionalization in general and exhort teaching to refrain from embracing a professional model (Bull, 1990; Ginsburg, 1988; Hoyle, 1980) and to consider seriously the motivations and eventual consequences for pursuing professionalism as a goal (Labaree, 1992, 1994). The lines of argument pursued by these individuals typically follow the criticisms of profession summarized by Hoyle and cited earlier (see pp. 18-19).

Ginsburg (1988) critiques the unintended consequences of allowing "ideologically informed conceptions of professionalism" (p. 129) to misinform the education of prospective teachers. He summarizes these conceptions in three themes, namely, the remuneration/service ideal, issues of power related to authority and autonomy, and social construction of competence; he claims that how the traditional manner in which each theme is developed within teacher education curricula serves to perpetuate a "foundation of legitimacy for unequal wealth and power between social classes and between gender groups" in society (p. 159). In Ginsburg's frame of

reference, the professionalization of teaching endows it with an elite status inappropriate to the role teachers should maintain in society.

Other authors employ additional criticisms. For instance, Bull (1990) speaks to "[t]he limits of teacher professionalization" (p. 87) by concluding that "[t]he full professionalization of teaching the young either as a public office or as a licensed practice is not...justified" (p. 117). He bases his argument on the lack of justification for professionalizing the selection and retention of teachers through licensing and the lack of moral autonomy on the part of students as clients of teachers. Labaree (1994) believes that "the movement to professionalize teaching has arisen from the status needs of teacher educators within the university" (p. 595). He cautions that the professionalization movement will subject teachers to the intellectual and social power of the university within which teacher education has become imprisoned (Labaree, 1992). Duffy (1994) seems to agree when he indicates that the establishment of professional development schools implies a "caste system in which professors are the gurus and teachers are followers" (p. 596). Hoyle (1980) provides an effective summary of the thinking of those who would deprofessionalize teaching by indicating that "[t]he call for increased professionalization is seen by them as serving to exaggerate the knowledge which teachers require to maintain an arbitrary distance between teacher and taught, to mystify the public and hence to act as a protection against accountability, and to gain influence and prestige in society generally" (p. 49).

<u>Professionalism and Effective Teaching</u>

Focus on the Problem

Hoyle (1980) delineates two purposes for the concept profession, namely, to describe and to provide symbolic or ideological connotation. The preceding pages have enlarged upon the first purpose, namely, a description of profession both in sociology and in teaching. In so doing, as does the majority of the literature on teacher professionalism, they have concentrated almost totally on the professionalization of teaching. However, it is apparent that efforts to gain professional status for teaching are heavily dependent upon the ideological connotation or value-laden implications of the concept, suggesting "first, that teaching is not a profession; and second, that there is something desirable, both for teachers and for the public welfare, in making teaching a profession" (Abdal-Haqq, 1992, p. 3).

When Darling-Hammond and Goodwin (1993) describe progress, or lack thereof, toward professionalism in teaching, they do so in the context of a "professional vision of teaching--one in which highly developed judgment grounded in knowledge of learners, learning, and teaching is used in a variety of contexts to meet the diverse needs of students" (p. 47). Thus, they seem to view teaching as an occupation for which increased professionalization implies improvement in the educational system through progress in meeting the needs of students. At the same time, when reflecting on how one approaches teaching as an activity, Berliner (Brandt, 1986) indicates that there must be an objective standard upon which to judge

its effectiveness. Anecdotal evidence can be found which points to use of professionalism as one criterion upon which effectiveness has been evaluated (Wamboldt, 1993). Professionalism is even described as a concept much broader than effectiveness, possessing a kind of "virtuous aspect [such as] a commitment to exemplary practice"(Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 46).

Clearly, a relationship is implied between effectiveness characterized by teachers' behaviors in the classroom and behaviors attributable to the professionalism of the teachers. However, one is at a loss to find studies of this relationship in practice, that is, to find references to how teachers themselves might view the connection between their own professionalism and their effectiveness in teaching.

But one cannot speculate upon the existence of a relationship between professionalism and effectiveness in teaching without understanding how effectiveness in teaching has come to be assessed. At first glance, the quest for such knowledge seems doomed to the same plight as that of the nature of profession, i.e., it appears a search for yet another "Platonic heaven." Indeed, research seems to indicate that, much the same as with profession, any answer to the question of what constitutes effective teaching emerges best through multiple approaches. The next section is therefore meant to provide a modest overview of images of teaching found in the literature and research on teaching outcomes in order to understand how investigators have approached the question of what constitutes effective teaching.

Images of Teaching

The image one has of teaching has at least some bearing on the manner in which it is practiced and assessed (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 1992; Shavelson, Webb, & Burstein, 1986; Tom, 1984). The image of teaching as a profession as outlined in the previous pages is clearly one which many educators hope to achieve. However, it is important to recognize that additional images to that of profession are also attached to teaching. Characterizations as labor, as craft and as art are often used to conceptualize the manner in which the work of teaching is perceived and organized (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993).

To espouse an image of teaching as labor "suggests work that is preplanned, highly structured and routinized, and closely supervised...In this role, the teacher is charged with implementing 'a defined set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes which lead to predetermined learning outcomes'" (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 23). Unfortunately, much educational reform based on strict enforcement of planned curricula envisions a role for teaching which leaves little room for creativity or judgment. Such an image of teaching clearly fails to align itself with that of the professional operating from a specific knowledge base and free to make autonomous judgments regarding practice.

Teaching as craft characterizes work that is "more likely to be licensed to ensure minimum standards of quality and to protect the public. Though craft workers exhibit specialized knowledge, their decisions are based on the application of standardized modes of practice" (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 24). The

executive approach to teaching (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 1992) is an example of its image as craft and "views the teacher...as a person charged with bringing about certain learnings, using the best skills and techniques available" (p. 4).

Recognition of teaching as a craft has not been consistently regarded as supportive of a professional image for teaching specifically because craft does not imply a scientific knowledge base for practice (Tom, 1984). However, Tom's own work on teaching as a moral craft and recent explorations of teacher knowledge and professional expertise have renewed the possibility for associating the image of craft with that of profession. "[E]ducation and training within a profession must include the opportunity for the student/employee to experience the types of problems and situations in which they are to be expert, in order for them to develop and automate relevant domain-specific procedures" (Doolitte & Yekovich, 1994, p. 3).

Tom (1984) was particularly instrumental in proposing the image of teaching as a moral craft. To the image of craft discussed above, he added the normative value inherent in teaching to view it as "a reflective approach toward the pursuit of desirable ends" (p. 127). More recent work by Hansen (1993) has centered on the levels of moral meaning inherent in classroom teaching. While teaching has the ability to influence what students do and, to some extent, how they develop as persons, it also has the potential for embodying within teachers' habitual conduct the impact teachers have on students through their daily exercise of personal power within the classroom. The moral meanings of classroom practice are often "the expression or enactment of the *person* the teacher is, which can encompass far more

than self-conscious intent" (Hansen, 1993, p. 671). The image of teaching as a moral craft appears compatible with the image of teaching as a profession.

Finally, teaching is also viewed as an art, "emphasiz[ing] personal creativity and adaptability" (Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 24). Attempts to develop this image strictly along the lines of the aesthetic, however, are doomed to failure (Tom, 1984) since artists are typically not concerned with clients and enjoy a good deal more freedom in the application of their skills. In addition, what happens to students is not solely the result of teacher intervention whereas what happens to a canvas is mediated directly by the artist. Of critical concern in applying the teaching-as-art image is the fact that people often perceive artists as "born," a problem in particular when coupled with the image of teaching as a profession. The development of professionals through acquisition of a specific knowledge base, motivation by altruistic intentions, and alignment with others in their occupational grouping, are not inbred characteristics and do not appear compatible with that unique aspect of the aesthetic experience.

Research on Teaching Outcomes

Not only has teaching thus acquired a variety of images found in the literature, but research on the act of teaching and its outcomes has also resulted in a multiplicity of models.

> Different research programs for the study of teaching select different
> parts of the [synoptic] map to define the phenomena for their inquiries.
> There are also other sorts of choices that determine the manner in which
> research on teaching is conducted. These include predilections for
> qualitative as against quantitative research methods, disciplinary or

interdisciplinary orientation, preference for the characterization of
behavior as against the representation of thought--behaviorism versus
mentalism, to use somewhat older terms--and, most broadly, the
conception of one's craft as a science in search of laws or as an exercise
of interpretation in search of meanings. (Shulman, 1986, p. 8)

Shulman thus provides background for development of what are referred to as

multiple paradigms of research on teaching arising from varying philosophies of

education and from varying methodological and psychological bases for exploration of

its meaning. He categorizes this body of research into several distinct areas of study,

namely, process-product or teacher effectiveness research, time and learning research

or Academic Learning Time (ALT) studies, pupil cognition and the mediation of

learning research, and classroom ecology studies. The agendas of these approaches

vary according to their basic orientation to the question of what makes good teaching.

For instance, process-product or teacher effectiveness studies "stress teacher behavior

over other classroom process variables....and student achievement gain over other

product variables" (Brophy & Good, 1986, p. 328). Pupil cognition and the

mediation of learning studies concentrate on the students, incorporating the influence

of cognitive science, the psychology of the personality, and the study of self-concept

(Shulman, 1986) in determining how teachers must employ an understanding of these

processes and constructs in their efforts to stimulate student learning.

Of particular interest for this investigation is the most recent trend in studies of

teaching which Shulman identifies as classroom ecology and which also falls under

the broad category of qualitative methods (Erickson, 1986). This body of research

utilizes various approaches characteristic of qualitative research methodology,

particularly ethnographic studies. A number of contemporary authors refer to this type of research when they employ narratives of teachers themselves or support the use of teacher "voices" in research on teaching (Britzman, 1986; Nelson, 1993; Ornstein, 1995). Although such studies have been criticized for their ambivalence and over-generalization, they have also been recommended for their ability to bring together content and pedagogy in the context of practical wisdom and in relationship to specific instances or cases (Brandt, 1992).

The conceptual and methodological changes inherent in this latest trend in research on teaching are reminiscent of the process-structural approach to the study of profession. They are not situated within traditional positivist approaches to research, but rather "within an interpretive framework reflecting phenomenological, hermeneutic, and interactionist perspectives [and have] moved [research on teaching] forward in [its] approaches to understanding life in and around classrooms" (Cole and Knowles, 1993, p. 474). In other words, they attempt to define effective teaching within the complex environment in which it occurs. Research in this tradition goes directly to the primary source for firsthand knowledge of teaching, that is, to teachers themselves.

Effective Teaching

Most conceptions of effective teaching are typically grounded in one or other approach to the study of teaching mentioned above. This study allowed both the meaning of professionalism and effectiveness to emerge from the participants. It must be noted that the meaning of effectiveness in this study (see p. 8) is applied in its

broadest sense and does not refer to the effectiveness studies, i.e., process-product research, alluded to above. The orientation of the researcher toward the meaning of effectiveness in the context of this project can best be summarized according to Zahorik's discussion of "good teaching" (1992).

He indicates that the nature of good teaching is reliant on much more than a recognition of a relationship between teaching and learning and cautions that any definition of good teaching which describes it as a singular model is too narrow or unrealistic. In addition, a definition of good teaching according to Zahorik should refrain from being overly ambitious by including such a wide variety of techniques that it assumes the jack-of-all-trades, master-of-none approach. It should also refrain from adopting a situational ethic, based on the premise that anything the teacher chooses to do is right. In his frame of reference, good teachers are purposeful, consistent, and skillful. He summarizes the combination of these traits thus:

> A good teacher…knows the kind of teacher he or she would like to be, employs classroom behaviors consistent with this view, and is proficient in the behaviors he or she chooses to use…Without direction in the form of purposes or beliefs, teacher behaviors lack consistency, and a clear style of teaching does not emerge…The teacher behaviors must be performed expertly, however, or else having a purpose and striving for consistency are useless. (p. 400)

Other attempts to characterize good teaching utilize the activities of teachers in the classroom. In their review of research studies dealing primarily with inner-city students, Levine and Ornstein (1990) organize the actions of effective teachers as those related to classroom management, direct instruction, time on task, questioning, comprehension instruction, level of cognitive instruction, and grouping. Their

categorization strongly reflects the process-product tradition in research on teaching. In a similar vein and also in the process-product tradition, Brophy and Good (1986) use Medley's analysis of five conceptions of the effective teacher as " (a) possessor of desirable personal traits; (b) user of effective methods; (c) creator of a good classroom atmosphere; (d) master of a repertoire of competencies; and (e) professional decision maker who has not only mastered needed competencies but learned when to apply them and how to orchestrate them" (p. 329).

In an analysis of archetypes found in teachers' stories in the interpretive approach to the study of teaching, Nelson (1993) proposed insight into effective performance and associates it with a "professional profile that...reiterates the self evaluation, reflection, pride, responsibility, and willingness to learn and grow" (p. 109). In a very different vein, Pineau (1994) describes a conception of teaching as performance, and shows how an epistemological alignment between education and performance studies "can develop into a 'language of possibility' for both disciplines" (p. 22) by enlightening discussions on what constitutes effective teaching.

Unquestionably, any number of images of teaching exist as well as conceptions of what constitutes good or effective teaching. It is also clear that those who support the increased professionalization and professionalism of teachers find some relationship between good teaching and the recognition of teaching as a profession. It remains to be seen how practicing teachers perceive that relationship.

Summary

Questions related to the definition of profession, the professionalization and professionalism of teaching, and the identification of good teaching can best be answered through using multiple approaches rather than definitive answers. What constitutes a profession is revealed by an analysis of trends in sociological thought reflecting a functionalist perspective in the listing of attributes of models of "true" professions, the concentration on autonomy as a single definitive attribute of profession, and the more contemporary process-structural analyses which investigate the development of professions within their historical, sociological, and rhetorical contexts.

An examination of writing on teaching as a profession likewise reveals a variety of approaches, frequently reflecting the same trends in sociological thought. Thus, this literature will often employ lists of traits to show how teaching is not a true profession, how it can only be regarded as a semi-profession, or how it should refrain from efforts to be considered a profession at all. Other studies employ historical or sociological analyses to indicate the lack of an appropriate context in which teaching has failed to develop as a profession. And although attempts to professionalize teaching are often criticized, there remains more support for such efforts than a lack thereof. This support is based on an implied "ontological dependence" between professionalism and effectiveness.

Research on effective teaching employs multiple paradigms and provides differing answers to the question of what constitutes good teaching. The most recent

trend in such research utilizes interpretive studies related to the context of teaching

and of teachers themselves reminiscent of the process-structural approach to the study

of professions. Chapter III will discuss the methodology used for this study and why

the classroom ecology or qualitative paradigm was considered the most appropriate to

explore if and how practicing teachers view the ontological dependence of

professionalism and effectiveness.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.
--Sherlock Holmes in "A Scandal in Bohemia"

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the qualitative approach employed in this investigation. It discusses how particular data sampling and data analysis techniques were conceptualized and applied to support the validity of the findings.

The previous chapter supplied evidence from a variety of sources to demonstrate the relationship perceived to exist between teacher professionalism and effectiveness. Largely missing from this material, however, was insight into how this same relationship is perceived by practitioners. Noting such an absence, this study attempted to avert the problem articulated above by one of literature's greatest detectives. It was an effort to develop theory based on fact, that is, to substantiate the link between professionalism and effectiveness from insight contributed by teachers themselves and subsequently, to lend credibility to the arguments of those who would base efforts to strengthen teaching upon this relationship.

Preliminary Observations on Qualitative Research

A Different Paradigm

Qualitative research, interpretive studies, and naturalistic inquiry are terms often used interchangeably to describe those methodologies which Denzin and Lincoln (1994) characterize as responsible for the "quiet methodological revolution [that] has been taking place in the social sciences" (p. ix). The "revolution" at hand is represented by the growing number of scholars concentrating on various aspects of the qualitative approach to research but all agreeing on at least one point: qualitative research, interpretive studies, naturalistic inquiry, and all methodologies under these umbrella terms embody a valid but very different approach to understanding human behavior than that represented by previously-held notions of empiricism. It is a "revolutionary" approach which Strauss and Corbin (1990) define as "research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (p. 17).

While interchangeable terminology may not be acceptable to all who work with these methodologies (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990), this study will employ the term "qualitative" to refer to the procedures employed in order to avoid confusion and maintain internal consistency. Regardless of the particular expression utilized, however, research in the qualitative mode presents a unique model for the discovery of knowledge. It is research conducted according to the processes implicit in the interchangeable terms, that is, it is interpretation of findings elicited in natural settings. And,

...because there are no algorithms, no statistical significance tests for
qualitative studies, that most exquisite of human capacities must come
into play: judgement. But good judgement is not a mindless activity.
It depends upon attention to detail, sensitivity to coherence,
appreciation of innuendo, and the ability to read subtext as well as text.
(Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 12)

Qualitative researchers approach their work from an entirely different

perspective than those who engage in quantitative analysis. According to Denzin and

Lincoln (1994),

[q]ualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality,
the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied,
and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers
emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to
questions that stress how social experience is created and given
meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement
and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes.
Inquiry is purported to be within a value-free framework. (p. 4)

As one might expect, stressing "the socially constructed nature of reality"

demands "the need to find a new lexicon that will do justice to even those aspects of

life that are, at base, ineffable" (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 98). How we come to

recognize the authenticity of our knowledge, how we prove our knowledge valid, how

we generalize to other aspects of life from what we have discovered, and how we

know that accounts of our knowledge are reliable all demand from qualitative

researchers a unique perspective that deserves at least brief attention here as the basis

for confidence in the results of the study at hand.

Objectivity

For many years, the scientific method has acculturated us into believing that

the search for reality, alluded to as the search for "Platonic heaven" in Chapter II,

should lead us to an "objective reality" discovered through *etic* analysis, the imposed frame of reference represented by a variety of quantitative/statistical models (Silverman, 1993). This objective reality is typically viewed along a kind of continuum at which the opposite pole is subjectivity, thought by positivists to be the supreme bane of researchers. However, subjectivity regarded by them as a state wherein the values and beliefs of the researcher are recognized for their power to influence data collection and analyses is precisely the framework within which qualitative researchers operate. They emphasize not only the "value-laden nature of inquiry" from the perspective of the researcher, but utilize *emic* analysis by working within the conceptual framework of the subjects themselves (Silverman, 1993).

Postmodernist philosophy has provided us with a different perspective on the overall "purity" of objectivism in science. "[R]esearchers are [now] aware that when they make observations they cannot argue that these are objective in the sense of being 'pure,' free from the influence of background theories or hypotheses or personal hopes and desires" (Phillips, 1990, p. 25). Instead, we have come to understand that "'objective' seems to be a label we apply to inquiries that meet certain procedural standards, but objectivity does not *guarantee* that the results of inquiries have any certainty. (It implies that the inquiries so labeled are free of gross defects...)" (Phillips, 1990, p. 23).

Contemporary attempts to answer questions regarding the nature of reality must take into account developments in the philosophy of science represented by the comments of D.C. Phillips. Such discussions no longer allow "objectivity" to exist

unchallenged in discussions of methodology. While such "[e]pistemological issues,

for all the arguing, are never settled" (Becker, 1993, p. 219), it is nonetheless

important to raise them at the outset of any study in order to recognize, without the

hope of ever completely addressing, appropriate questions about the credibility of

knowledge produced by an investigation. Qualitative researchers recognize that

"[t]here is no single interpretive truth...there are multiple interpretive communities,

each having its own criteria for evaluating an interpretation" (Denzin & Lincoln,

1994, p. 15). Growing acceptance of qualitative methodologies has created the quiet

revolution wherein the value-ladenness of qualitative research has developed as a

legitimate framework from which to approach particular questions and to consider the

appropriateness of findings related to questions of meaning in a social situation.

Validity

According to Joseph Maxwell (1992), without characteristic controls for

threats to validity and the formal testing of prior hypotheses, it appears to those

acculturated in positivist thinking that qualitative studies cannot provide valid results.

However, what is at issue, according to Maxwell, is not that qualitative data might be

regarded as invalid because they are subjective, but rather that qualitative researchers

conceptualize validity in their own terms since qualitative researchers describe,

interpret, and explain phenomena differently than do those engaged in quantitative

research.

As a critical realist, Maxwell prefers to address the validity of accounts rather

than data or methods. He "assumes that we can have no direct knowledge of the

objects of our accounts and thus no independent entity to which to compare these accounts" (p. 283). He proposes several types of validity common to qualitative research which are listed below along with central questions which should generally guide the qualitative researchers' pursuit of validity in the context of their work:

1. Descriptive validity: does the account accurately describe the data as they were seen or heard by the researcher?

2. Interpretive validity: is the interpretation of the account true to the perspective of the individuals included in it?

3. Theoretical validity: is there consensus within the community about the terms used to characterize the phenomena?

Maxwell's analyses of descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical validity reflect the conclusion of Eisner and Peshkin (1990) that "[v]alidity, in a basic sense, pertains to the congruence of the researcher's claims to the reality his or her claims seek to represent" (p. 97).

A particular approach used by qualitative researchers to improve the validity of their research is referred to as triangulation (Mathison, 1988). Stake (1994) summarizes this concept thus:

> To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, we employ various procedures, including redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations...For qualitative case work, these procedures generally are called *triangulation*...[which] has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. But, acknowledging that no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen. (p. 241)

Attention to the various types of validity proposed by Maxwell as well as efforts at triangulation thus illustrate means by which qualitative researchers can choose to support the validity of their findings.

Generalizability

Generalizability, also referred to as external validity, "refers to the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times, or settings than those directly studied" (Maxwell, 1992, p. 293). And just as claims of validity are to be understood differently in qualitative research, likewise, the generalizability of findings in qualitative studies are to be approached from a distinct perspective. "A consensus appears to be emerging that for qualitative researchers generalizability is best thought of as a matter of the 'fit' between the situation studied and others to which one might be interested in applying the concepts and conclusions of that study" (Schofield, 1990, p. 226).

The majority of data gathered by qualitative researchers is not quantitative, nor are the subjects of individual case studies or interviews, often the subject of qualitative studies, typically selected at random (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990). As a result, they cannot be subject to the same review and replication through inferential statistical procedures as are numerical data. Instead, again according to Maxwell (1992), the generalizability of qualitative investigation is "based on the assumption that [a particular] theory may be useful in making sense of similar persons or situations, rather than on an explicit sampling process and the drawing of conclusions about a specified population through statistical inference" (p. 293).

<u>Reliability</u>

Reliability or accuracy is another general research issue that must be addressed regardless of the particular research approach utilized. However, as can be surmised from the qualitative approach to generalizability, "reliability in the traditional sense of replicability is pointless" (Janesick, 1994, p. 217). In qualitative research, according to Miller (1993, unpublished communication), reliability can be assessed in a variety of ways. Similarities across respondents, careful construction of interview schedules, and consistent application of rules of inference intrinsic to the methods themselves can all act as indicators of the reliability of qualitative procedures and findings.

<center>The Choice for Grounded Theory</center>

Hoyle (1980) argues that the best means of exploring ways of furthering the professionalization and professional development of teachers is to take teachers' definitions of their problems as the starting point for discussion. And, as has already been noted in this investigation (see p. 30), the trend among researchers occupied with the study of teaching has been to do just that by engaging in a variety of qualitative approaches in their investigations. In keeping with this trend and in light of the particular question explored in this study, a methodology had to be chosen that would be true to teachers' interpretations of the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness. This researcher therefore chose grounded theory since "[t]he notion of discovery, so fundamental to grounded theory, includes discovering first the world as seen through the eyes of the participants and then the basic social processes or structures that organize that world" (Hutchinson, 1986, p. 51).

As a specific methodology, Strauss and Corbin (1990) define grounded theory as:

> ...a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon. The research findings constitute a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation, rather than consisting of a set of numbers, or a group of loosely related themes. Through this methodology, the concepts and relationships among them are not only generated but they are also provisionally tested...The purpose of grounded theory is, of course, to build theory that is faithful to and illuminates the area under study. (p. 24)

The most common inductive procedure applied to data in order to generate grounded theory is referred to as the constant comparative method of analysis. The constant comparative method subjects data under investigation, in the form of field notes, interview transcriptions, structured interview responses, or other usable formats, to ever deeper analyses in order to produce categories from which eventually can be derived a theory grounded in the data itself. Glaser (1965) describes four stages of the constant comparative method, namely, comparing applicable incidents to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory, and writing the theory (p. 439). These stages reflect an intensified inductive spiral using categories of meaning identified in the data as starting points. Glaser's stages were further refined into what Strauss and Corbin (1990) identify as the following techniques of coding data:

1. Open coding as the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data (p. 61);
2. Axial coding as a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories (p. 96); and,

3.   <u>Selective coding</u> as the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development (p. 116)

Through rigorous attention to the procedures implicit in both Glaser's stages and Strauss and Corbin's coding techniques, "'grounded theory' offers an approximation of the creative activity of theory-building found in good observational work, compared to the dire abstracted empiricism present in most wooden statistical studies" (Silverman, 1993, p. 47). It seeks to build a meaningful framework for understanding the meaning of a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those involved therein.

"Grounded theories are guided by the assumption that people do, in fact, have patterns of experience. They order and make sense of their environment, although their world may appear disordered or non-sensical to the observer" (Hutchinson, 1986, pp. 52-53). Grounded theory and the methods of analysis common to it thus appeared to fulfill the needs of this researcher as she approached the problem of how best to investigate the meaning of the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness for practicing teachers.

<u>Approach to the Question</u>

Developing the Interview Schedule

The semi-structured interview was considered the most efficient, effective, and reliable approach to gathering data for this study. Construction of an original interview schedule was based on the author's review of relevant literature and her

perception of how the concept of professionalism might be approached in discussion with practicing teachers. Questions related to effectiveness were adapted from Dan C. Lortie's "Five Towns Interview Outline" developed to gather data for his study, Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study (1975).

Efforts to assure reliability and validity of the schedule were orchestrated through a dual approach. In the first place, several iterations of the schedule were subjected to intensive scrutiny by the supervising professor and a seven-member graduate seminar in advanced qualitative methods. Their assessment helped determine whether or not the questions themselves as well as the manner in which they were organized could provide valid insight into both the meaning of professionalism and effectiveness as well as a relationship between them.

Secondly, the schedule was field tested with a group of four randomly-selected teachers who were recommended on the basis of their perceived effectiveness in the classroom by administrators and parents and for the representativeness of their experience in elementary classrooms. They had experience in multiple grade levels and in different types of schools. One teacher taught English as a second language in a public school; the others taught elementary grades in public and private schools. The four teachers acted individually as participants in the interview process, and also subsequently participated in a group discussion, directed by an outside facilitator, which focused on their understanding of the content of the questions, their clarity, and the manner in which they were delivered, i.e., the interviewing style of the researcher. Discussion by the field test group as well as their individual interviews

provided an early attempt at formulating "generative and concept-relating questions" (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, pp. 274-275) which assisted the researcher in developing potential categories for analysis of interview data drawn from the study's actual sample. The final version of the interview schedule is included as Appendix A.

Conceptualizing and Identifying the Sample

Qualitative researchers typically engage in purposive sampling as "determined by the needs of the study, not external criteria" (Morse, 1994, p. 229). In addition, in qualitative research, the sample must be relevant to the conceptual framework of the study as well as to the research question (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Likewise, it is important that the sample is representative of a similar knowledge base and/or experience (Morse, 1994). Demographic representativeness, as typically characterizing the sample of a quantitative study, is not required since quantification rarely occurs. Purposive sampling in qualitative research helps to increase the generalizability of the study.

The validity of asking practicing teachers to discuss their own professionalism as well as to engage in an assessment of their effectiveness in the classroom appeared to necessitate the choice of a sample of participants already judged effective in some manner. In addition, providing a relatively similar knowledge base and teaching experience among the participants meant including teachers with, at the very least, experience in similar grade levels. These purposive criteria for the sample of participants were met through gaining cooperation of the Golden Apple Foundation.

The Foundation is a not-for-profit organization which, as one of its primary activities, honors outstanding classroom teachers in Chicago and its suburbs. Awards rotate each year among grade levels, with high school teachers eligible one year, sixth through eighth grade teachers the next, and pre-kindergarten through fifth the following year. Teachers are nominated by members of the public and then invited to apply. Approximately 1000 nominations are received during the Fall of each year. Ten winners each year are chosen from among thirty finalists. Selection for the awards are made by a volunteer committee of professional educators on the basis of written applications, classroom observations, and interviews. Winners receive a symbolic award as well as a full semester's paid sabbatical for graduate study at a local, nationally acclaimed university and a personal computer. They also become members of the Golden Apple Academy which in turn has developed a number of local programs to promote the advancement of teaching. At the time of this study, a total of 60 teachers had received awards in the pre-kindergarten through eighth grade levels.

Upon written agreement with the Foundation included as Appendix B, this researcher was provided with a listing of these 60 award winners. From that list a randomly selected sample of 15 teachers was chosen, representing three teachers from each of the five years in which elementary teachers received the award. The size of the sample was considered a representative number which would likely provide ample opportunity to identify similarities across respondents as well as to allow for possible negative cases to emerge (Robinson, 1951). These 15 were first contacted by letter

(included as Appendix C) and then by a follow-up call to ascertain agreement to participate in the interview. Interviews were subsequently scheduled with each participant. Written agreement (see Appendix D) with guarantee of anonymity was obtained from each teacher willing to act as a participant, as well as a data sheet (see Appendix E) which provided a general profile of the participants. Interviews were conducted over a four-month period.

The 15 teachers who agreed to act as participants in the study had an average among them of 18.5 years teaching in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. One teacher acquired most of her experience in special education. The teachers taught in both public and private schools located in the city of Chicago as well as in its suburbs. At the time of the interviews, none of the teachers taught in religiously-affiliated private schools, although several had had experience in such an environment. The sample included three male and 12 female participants. Three participants were minorities. Interviews were conducted at a location and time requested by the participant. Each interview was audio-taped and subsequently transcribed by the researcher herself.

While winning an award for teaching was not the focus of the study, several teachers juxtaposed their experiences as professionals with that honor. To a degree, therefore, this researcher recognizes the award-winning characteristic of the sample of participants as potentially limiting the generalizability of the study. However, it should also be noted that the participants did not universally refer to their award.

Analyzing the Data

The researcher utilized multiple means to ensure the interpretive validity of the study. Transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed according to the open, axial, and selective coding techniques suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and described earlier in this chapter (see pp. 53-54). Results were also examined by a second reviewer skilled in qualitative research methods and were scrutinized through use of NUD*IST, a computer software program designed to handle unstructured data.

Use of computer software in the analysis of qualitative data, a relatively new but burgeoning technology in the field, deserves particular mention. Such software typically serves one or more purposes: to produce and revise text; to retrieve and analyze the content of text; to organize text systematically for search and retrieval; to assist in dividing text into segments, attaching codes to these segments and displaying all resulting "chunks;" to help make connections between codes, thus developing higher-level classifications and categories; and, finally, even to build and test theory (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 311-312). While use of computer software still demands preliminary judgements on the part of the researcher regarding choice of initial categories upon which to base beginning text searches, the software not only manages, explores, and searches the text of documents with more ease, but indexes the results of these processes for reference and for testing linkages. In this study, NUD*IST was used in particular to attach codes to meaningful segments of text, to display the resulting classifications, and to check the occurrence and consistency of proposed linkages.

Additional support for the interpretive validity of the study was achieved through the researcher's consistent use of memoing, a technique which "tie[s] together different pieces of data into...recognizable cluster[s]...to show that those data [were] instances of a general concept" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 72). Memoing provided tangible evidence of ongoing analysis and intermediary conceptualizations. Triangulation through a review of relevant literature and confirmation through reading of interview transcripts by another reviewer were employed to strengthen the theoretical validity of the findings. Findings were recorded in narrative as well as in graphic form.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Qualitative research attempts to answer questions related to the creation and meaning of social experience. Its various methods describe, interpret, and explain phenomena differently than quantitative research and therefore also approach the research canons of objectivity, validity, generalizability, and reliability in an intrinsically unique fashion. Grounded theory, as one qualitative research method, is especially noteworthy for testing data in order to "ground" a theory from within it. Grounded theory was chosen as an appropriate methodology for investigating the central question of this study, namely, how practicing teachers perceived the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness.

Through semi-structured interviews of a field test group of four elementary teachers and a study sample 15 award-winning teachers, the researcher attempted to gather data relative to the question at hand. Constant comparative analysis of

verbatim transcriptions of the interviews yielded data which were subjected to various

levels of coding and consistent memoing by the researcher and a second experienced

coder. The data were also subjected to analysis by a computer software program

designed to handle unstructured data. Efforts to assure the reliability of the

instrument and the process as well as to attend to considerations of validity were made

throughout the study. Findings are presented in both narrative and graphic form in

Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

THE CASE FOR A GROUNDED THEORY

Discovering Categories and Concepts

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness by using the personal observations of a sample of award-winning teachers regarding their understanding and practice of professionalism and their own effectiveness in the classroom. This chapter, divided into three parts, features the discovery of meaning associated with those two individual concepts and the possibility of their relationship developed in the course of analyzing the verbatim interview transcripts which constitute the study data.

The first section reports the defining characteristics of the two main components of the study, professionalism and effectiveness, as seen through the eyes of the study participants. It is loosely organized around the order of the questions in the interview schedule (see Appendix A). The characteristics themselves were derived from a dual approach to open and axial coding which included manual line-by-line review and computerized coding and investigation of the complete set of interview transcripts by the researcher. Open coding in particular yielded the initial breakdown of the data into the characteristics detailed in the first section.

The highly inductive process characteristic of qualitative research and, in particular, the constant comparative methods used in grounded theory, are not easily compartmentalized into a step-by-step process although, for academic purposes, it is possible to differentiate between various levels of analysis. For instance, in Chapter III, pp. 53-54, while mention was made of both Glaser's stages of constant comparative analysis and Strauss and Corbin's coding techniques, an accounting of how the interpretation of the deeper meaning of the study's findings portrayed in the second section of this chapter cannot easily be explained in terms of a single process. "Though open and axial coding are distinct analytic procedures, when the researcher is actually engaged in analysis he or she alternates between the two modes" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 98). In general, however, connections made between categories are said typically to be arrived at through axial coding (see p. 53). As in all grounded theory, however, the claim cannot be made that those connections have occurred during a deliberate "second step" as the order of sections in this chapter might imply.

The arrangement of the chapter into sections should not, therefore, imply a "cookbook" approach to the analytic process. Rather, the chapter is organized to lead the reader through a carefully constructed case for what appears in the third section, namely, a plausible grounded theory to explain the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness drawn from the data in this particular study and for which every effort has been made to offer a faithful and accurate representation (Altheide & Johnson, 1994).

Unless otherwise cited, comments included in quotation marks are drawn directly from the verbatim transcriptions of the 15 participant interviews. To protect the anonymity of the study participants, any references to specific demographics or, in some cases, to particular subjects taught by individual participants are intentionally vague.

<div align="center">Reflections on Work</div>

<u>Characteristics of an Occupation</u>

The first question in the schedule, *Do you think there's a difference between calling work a profession or an occupation? Would you explain the difference as you see it?,* was intended to assist participants in describing the ambiguous concept of work and, more importantly, of profession. Information collected from responses to this question provided insight into the criteria by which participants differentiated occupation from profession.

12 of the 15 participants attempted to describe occupation. Three characteristics of occupation explicitly surfaced from these participants' responses. They offer an early indication of what were later repeated as significant attributes of profession in general and in relationship to teaching.

Most notably, participants suggested that an occupation was characterized by a lesser degree of **personal autonomy**, reflected in an individual's potential for choice of work or his or her freedom to modify the work itself. For instance:

> "Occupation is something you do because you have to. Life has put you in that spot."

"You know, an occupation is, it's a job, it's something many people hold to make money."

"[w]ith an occupation, say an electrician. You go everyday and you look at your plans and you do the work prescribed in those plans and your job is finished."

"Whereas an occupation would be, include a lot of types of employment where you are simply trying to meet the requirements of your employee, employer, what they specify you need to do... ."

One participant described his perception of this degree of autonomy in

relationship both to occupation and profession:

"[i]n a profession, I can change the ground rules, and in an occupation I can't....And I can change what law means. I can change medicine. I can't change chemistry so chemistry can't be a profession."

Several participants used the amount of time devoted to work in order to

exemplify degree of **personal commitment** as a means of discriminating between

occupation and profession. In the case of an occupation as suggested by the

participants, that time was defined by the parameters of the work day:

"but I took it and I felt about it nevertheless as a job. You know, I would put in my time and I would just go home and I had my other life."

"...but the idea that an occupation that you do it for a certain amount of hours and then you come home and, you don't have to worry about it until the next day."

"I think there is a difference between an occupation and between professionalism because I see an occupation as just something that you're putting your time in and getting the job done and, um, at whatever level you're up to that day for instance.

Lastly, one participant indicated a lesser degree of **personal gratification** as a

distinguishing feature of an occupation. In her example which follows, she

characterized an occupation as work in which enjoyment appears to be seriously

lacking:

> "It could be something that you don't particularly enjoy doing. It could be something you do automatically, mechanically. You could sit there six hours a day and type briefs but you're really, your heart is not into that defense that's going into the briefs."

All but one participant acknowledged a difference between work categorized

as an occupation or a profession; two participants made no explicit attempt to describe

occupation and chose instead to concentrate more on developing the concept of

profession or vocation. The former "sort of group[ed] the whole of them together"

(i.e., "careers, job, profession, occupation") but later described teaching for herself

personally as a profession because "it's almost a 24-hour-a-day commitment." Thus,

while she was initially ambiguous in her distinction between occupation and

profession, she answered each of the remaining questions in the schedule in reference

to herself as a professional and to her behavior as professionalism.

Characteristics of a Profession

In attempting to explain the difference between occupation and profession all

participants without exception concentrated either on the latter or, as will be shown,

on an iteration of their conceptualization of work as vocation and/or calling. In many

cases, even prior to being asked the second question, *Which term, occupation or*

profession, describes teaching for you personally? Why?, participants personalized

their understanding of profession by relating it immediately to their own work of

teaching. However, several generic characteristics of profession grounded in the data

did surface which illuminated the meaning of profession as understood by this particular sample of teachers and constituted the basis for their affirmation of teaching as a profession. To avoid confusion, it should be noted that participants often used the terms profession, professional, and professionalism interchangeably; their usage of these terms was not consistent with the meaning of each term as originally defined in this study (see pp. 7-8).

Most participants differentiated the context of profession from other forms of work by means of **practice requirements**. These requirements involve:

(1) **standards for performance**

"When I think of a profession, I think about an occupation with, with some standards, with some educational standards and some on-the-job standards."

"And I think setting high standards is part of what I truly believe in, in being a professional."

"...I think professional would be one that has more self direction to it and there's more of a responsibility that you are trying to meet some standards that you're setting for yourself."

"I've always felt that my profession was teacher and with that word in mind, that it carried more responsibility, I think, than occupation."

(2) **educational preparation**

"Well, I think usually people think of a profession as a, an area in which one has gotten higher education, that is, a college degree or an advanced degree as opposed to an occupation."

(3) **continuing education**

"...in a profession, you need to constantly update yourself and constantly be aware of changes and trends."

"Well, technology is changing so rapidly that, to me, a true professional is someone who keeps up on all the latest business."

In their generic descriptions of profession, participants also used time as a factor in determining degree of **personal commitment** as they did when describing occupation. However, a striking quantitative difference in the amount of time is involved when this characteristic was applied to profession:

"A professional is the one who is considered a 24-hour person... ."

"Also, profession implies that you are working almost 24 hours, nevertheless, it's not like you're going to punch in a clock then you're finished up when you punch out. You're constantly thinking about issues whether or not you're actually doing some physical labor; you're engaged in thinking about problem solving for the job, whether or not you're in the office."

For those participants who discussed profession in broad terms, the nature of the personal commitment exceeded description by time alone. **Personal commitment** tied to **personal identity** was universally regarded by these participants as an indicator of professional behavior and exemplified in the following comments:

"Professionalism, which I do feel, is more of a way of life rather than an attitude."

"...professionalism is, is where you have, um, assimilated or integrated the values that you attach to that job to the point that you don't really distinguish between who you are when you're doing the job and who you are when you're not at the workplace, let's say. So that, um, so that the difference is sort of, um, your perspective on the depth of your work, how much it means to you, who you are."

"When I was a kid I remember hearing Margaret Meade say that ...a job is something that you get paid to do and a profession is something that, that if all other things were equal, you'd pay someone else for the opportunity to do it. And, um, I think that, you know, that's how I see it."

"I think, maybe it would be a feeling that this is what you can do. This is what you're good at. This is what you should do."

Just as a lack of **personal gratification** characterized an occupation, the opposite was true for profession:

"A profession, yea, I do see a difference. A profession is, to me, something that you do because you enjoy doing it."

<u>Vocation and Calling</u>

Prior to a more detailed discussion of profession in relationship to teaching, it should be noted that several participants used vocation and/or calling as references to describe the work of teaching. The concept was neither particularly well developed by any of the participants who used either of these two terms nor is it readily discovered in research on teaching. These references therefore warrant mention here. The following comments illustrate this usage:

"Gee, what do you think?..you know, very much it's a calling. I don't even think of it as a profession. It's even more than that, it's a calling."

"There's a calling, there's like a need that's been shaped up when you're a child inside of you. You just have this overwhelming feeling that you have to do this. This is something you have been called to. So, that's where I think the term profession comes in. You profess a love, it's like hunger for doing this... ."

"And when I think of profession I think more of calling, like doctors, attorneys. I like to think of teachers as professionals."

"My profession goes into the area now of vocation. I'm a professional. And, for me, teaching is a vocation."

"My sense of calling and, the depth with which whatever it is that comes out, I mean, the depth from which I work. It's deep work with me. It's something that's, it gets deeper and deeper each year."

"The only thing I can think of is a calling. You know, and you see it in ministry and you see it in people who become doctors and people who become social workers. They have an affinity for something. They do it well. And, they have a calling. And to me, that kind of fits in with professionalism."

"But when I think of my father [a minister] saying that he doesn't feel he could do anything else, I feel I could do anything else, but I wouldn't be happy doing something else. And so, I feel in a way it is a calling."

Reflections on Teaching

Both through their descriptions of teaching as a profession and their answers to the third question of the interview schedule, *Do you feel a sense of professionalism with respect to your own teaching? Would you describe what that means as best you can?*, participants elaborated on the meaning of teaching as a profession and on the behavior, i.e., professionalism, they attributed to themselves as professionals. With only three exceptions discussed as unique cases at the end of this section, they regarded teaching as a profession and, as previously mentioned, universally personalized their discussion of profession by almost immediate references to their own feelings and beliefs about teaching. Because they were more likely to be profuse in their comments about teaching as a profession rather than about profession in general, the characteristics gleaned from their responses offer more detailed insight into what they meant by profession. Their comments about profession in general and teaching in particular are therefore closely aligned. Their comments are also unmistakably as well as unabashedly value-oriented.

<u>Characteristics of Teaching as Profession</u>

As with profession in general, one of the key building blocks of the profession

and professionalism of teaching is related to **practice requirements** in the form of

educational preparation and the personal need for **continuing education**. The

following excerpts illustrate the meaning that participants attached to these

requirements:

> "I really feel that teachers are professionals. And, that, um, that what
> sets us apart from the other occupations is that element of always, of the
> ongoing education and always, always being students ourselves...So that's one
> of the areas that I think sets, makes me feel professional, is my commitment to
> keeping myself on top and at the cutting edge of what's happening in
> educational research."

> "You know, I continue to try and do things, I have gone to
> conferences, taken extra courses when they were offered, kept up on the
> reading, the professional reading. Working with graduate students has been a,
> each year has been an important growth process for me professionally.
> Working the graduate program in the summers, I set up a math learning lab
> for the masters' students. That was an important part of moving, continuing
> on professionally."

> "On the other hand, the technology is changing so rapidly that if you're
> a true professional you've got to do your best to keep up with it. To be
> effective with the children... ."

> "Well, I'll continue to go to school and I've gone to school to just keep
> my hand in the latest things that are going on."

> "And, in my profession you have to, well in every profession you have
> to grow and you keep up all the time. There's, you can never say I know
> everything."

> "I behave professionally, and I want, what I strive to do, what do I do?
> There's reading, there's reflection, there's courses that are there, conferences,
> congresses... ."

"...to keep up on all the latest reading, goes to conferences and things. That is my notion of a professional; you do it as long as you enjoy it and you continue to grow the whole time. At the point at which you stop growing, then I think it's time to get out of the profession."

The standards for performance that participants associated with teaching were more highly developed than that of profession in general. They took on the values of a **personal code of behavior** which guided their activity as indicated by the following comments:

"There's a behavior and identity. I behave a certain way and then how do I perceive myself. I perceive myself as a professional."

"I mean, there's at least two ways I can see the term profession applied. One is the self-motivated part or the self, the person setting their own goals. The other one is a set of standards that the whole body of teachers would have to meet."

"And I expect excellence from the children and I have been accused of expecting perfection from them. You know, and I don't get perfection from them. I don't get it from myself. But we give it our best shot. We give it our best shot."

"For me, I try to be a professional in the way I dress, down to the way I treat people, the way I, the expectations that I set for myself as well as for my students."

"I see the professionalism as being sort of a code that determines my behavior in the classroom where I have to be very conscientious about how I interact with the children and stay disposed to them the whole time as opposed to giving them work to do and then going off in my corner or something like that. That's sort of a code of ethics that I define for myself... ."

[Interviewer: You said teaching is a profession for you. How does that show itself in your teaching?] "Well, I think in the way you conduct yourself, in the way you conduct yourself."

"...but a lot of what I would consider being a professional is my own personal standards and reflecting on what my closest colleagues are doing."

"And this is what I think true professionalism is. If you're truly a professional, you're going to be the best that you can be."

As with profession in general, participants tied their **personal commitment** to teaching with their **identity** in a variety of ways:

"So, the professionalism takes in an awful lot. It, giving your time, giving your love, your trust, and your, really, your blood, sweat and tears."

"...that it's something that is such a deep part of who I am and what I do that, um, no national board of professional standards, you know, no certification team, um, there really isn't much that any other, that other people could do to convince me that I'm a professional. I know I'm a pro-, I know that I'm a teacher."

"I don't think of that. I don't think, gee, I'm a professional, I just don't think about it. Just everyday is just doing it. It's in me. Yea, just because you're asking me now, I haven't thought of it before...It's part of my life."

"It has to really have meaning for you otherwise you're getting, you're collecting a paycheck and you're not really invested, totally invested in what you should be there for and the people you should be there for."

"Well, if you define those the way I just did, profession being something that you project a lot of value on and all that, then there's no way that teaching would be something less than that because it's, you know, it's a totally consuming and even then you feel like you're doing a bad job of it, it's just that you're not meeting up to the measures of the profession as opposed to some jobs don't seem to merit a lot of effort and energy and, you know, striving to do it the best."

"I have a sense of professionalism in my teaching because, like I said before, I'm committed to what I do... ."

"So, it's just, it just consumes me. It's with me all the time."

Supports and Obstacles

Responses to the fourth and fifth questions in the interview schedule provided further insight into how participants defined profession and professionalism. By

asking *What supports your sense of professionalism?* and *What works against your sense of professionalism?* most participants offered elements which could be interpreted as external or internal influences on their behavior as professionals. A comparison of supports and obstacles gleaned from the responses often yielded the same categories, though viewed from either the presence or the absence thereof.

For instance, without exception, all participants indicated that **collegiality** was a strong influence supporting professionalism. However, depending on their individual circumstances, several participants revealed the importance of collegiality by reflecting on its absence in their circumstances as seen in the following comments:

> "You know, I don't know if everybody feels that way. Sometimes it's pretty lonesome, because sometimes I feel I'm the only one who feels that way... ."

> "But you know, sometimes it does get a little depressing. Seems like I'm the only one that's blowing wind on the fire. And occasionally, I do meet other people who are not, whose spirits haven't been dampened... ."

> "So, I think, the part that's hard is when you show your joy or whatever, other people sometimes put you down. So, you know, don't work so hard. Don't try so hard. Just take it easy."

> "Another thing is school politics will erode my sense of professionalism a lot. It makes it hard sometimes to be, to feel good about what we're all about when we don't seem to all be about the same things."

On the other hand, when that same collegiality was present, the support for professionalism was readily apparent:

> "My, what supports my professionalism is the, the people that I work with intimately here at school...I don't think there's anything as important as the, the support you get at your home base."

"Well, interaction with my colleagues who I respect highly and who are, many of them are teaching other teachers or they are involved in projects, they're continually educating themselves, they're continually thinking and processing information about teaching and reflecting on it."

Collegiality often extended beyond the immediate school environment:

"If it weren't for the Golden Apple, let's have that one. First, I want to just tell you about that. Um, number one, I'm not treated as a professional by anyone in my community. My school community. Absolutely no one."

"I think there are days when I feel professionalism. When I go to Golden Apple meetings, I feel professionalism. Sometimes in the nitty-gritty, day-to-day things that you have to do as a teacher, I don't feel quite the professionalism where things that are expected of you, that you think, you've got to be kidding...but when you're around some people that don't have that professional pride, then I think it, you make, you lost your glow."

"Well, you know, many of my close friends are either former teachers or current teachers. So that they understand the kind of work that I do...there are very few people in my world who are ignorant of the fact that I'm a teacher...They know me with respect to my profession...I created a life style for myself that supports me from which I receive nourishment that allows me to teach."

"...I deal with a few foundations and a few organizations that are on the cutting edge of what teaching is to be, what it is now, what it is to be in the future. And, that sort of keeps you right there where you need to be."

The presence or absence of very specific elements within the immediate **school environment** acted as supports and/or obstacles to professionalism. In many cases, the lack of **money** and **resources** was most noticeable in the responses of participants who worked in urban school settings. For example:

"I think, unfortunately, in your large urban areas, the extent of professionalism is not there because the monies are not there to make these types of things happen. I think that you can have an equally professional group of teachers in urban areas if the money was there for this."

"But it's just that in suburban schools, there are more resources, there are more programs, both during and after school to occupy the children's time. And that's absent, that is so absent in inner city schools."

"It's very difficult because, it's very frustrating, because we're facing another deficit within another year, you know, we live on the edge of these deficits, you know. And I've, for the last 20-some years at home, you know, we're always living on the edge of the next deficit and it's very frustrating at times."

When present, however, a supportive school environment created a significant

positive impact for participants:

"But that's one really special thing about our district, that we're heard pretty clearly and listened to so that we receive what we need. And it may not all come at one time, but certainly they continue to offer us things we need...
."

"I am very lucky. I am in a wonderful school...I'm coming from me talking about the school which is my favorite participant. To switch from talking about myself to talking about the school because I really think that I gave, it gave me the fertile soil for me to grow."

Beyond the immediate school environment, participants found adverse **societal**

influences to be a handicap in maintaining their own professionalism in teaching.

Specifically, they noted the lack of respect for education and for teachers prevalent in

our culture:

"...there isn't always a lot of outside support from the public in general for teaching, for viewing teaching as a profession...Because I think that, when people look at what we're paid, they look at a nine to ten month year and they look at an 8:30 to 3:00 day and they don't see all the behind-the-scenes stuff."

"That you live in our society, doesn't really care about young people and doesn't really care about education, it's you know, fundamentally anti-intellectual. That, that there's not a lot of respect for the teaching profession."

"Society. I don't think that education has its rightful place as priority in America. It boggles my mind. There are so many things wrong with

American society and it would seem to me that the first place you would turn to changing society would be its educational system. That is not the case in America. It has been a profession that hasn't been considered a profession."

"People who don't believe in it, you know, and that's teachers as well as other people, and you know, in and out of education work against you in the way that teachers are portrayed."

Finally, other specific individual factors were collectively related to the environment in which participants practice their profession and were directly attributable to the school and/or societal influence. Specific examples were mentioned by at least several participants in each category listed below. Representative comments on these factors include:

(1). **salary:**

"But in terms of physical things, I don't need any more than what I have. But that does affect me personally because we are, we are paid a fraction of what we are worth in my opinion."

(2) **support services:**

"It offends me that, that I work every bit as hard as my brothers that are attorneys...with less support. You know, if I want to send a letter I write the letter, I type it up, I send it. I don't have an executive secretary."

(3) **bureaucratic infringement:**

"...there are just so many influences that, the number of kids you end up having in your class, the number of kids that I'm expected to, to relate to and care about and work with... ."

Unique Cases

As already mentioned, one participant failed to differentiate between various terms designating work but proceeded to characterize herself as a professional.

Another participant, when asked to designate teaching as an occupation or profession,

took issue with the term profession:

> "because I think a lot of times it's an issue of snobbery more than it is
> of quality, of behavior...it seems like a class distinction to me."

On the other hand, this same participant, articulated quite clearly what

professionalism should mean:

> "where you have assimilated or integrated the values that you attach to
> that job to the point that you don't really distinguish who you are when you're
> doing the job and who you are when you're not at the workplace...so that the
> difference is sort of, your perspective on the depth of your work, how much it
> means to you, who you are... ."

She proceeded to refer to teaching as "one of the most professional

professions, in that sense" and likewise, therefore, hers was not regarded as a

confounding position in the study.

Only one participant was adamant in referring consistently to teaching as a

"calling" rather than a profession. Her argument is well developed in the following

excerpts:

> "And professionalism is something that I associate with lawyers and
> doctors and it's something where, for all kinds of reasons, not the least of
> which you have a very definite technology that's common that people have to
> understand together. And, so that there has to be this common understanding
> about the technology and standard practices that people come together in a
> group and develop this profession. It has this historical antecedent, but I don't
> think teaching has, or will really ever have, I mean we can pretend that's it's a
> profession in one sense but I don't think we're ever going to have that
> common technology. I think that it's too deep. I think it's too, um, primal,
> teaching, as an archetype. I mean, it comes out of the same spirit that
> medicine does, but, medicine lends itself very well with the scientific tradition
> in a way that I don't think teaching does."

And in another place, the same participant stated in response to being asked to describe professionalism in teaching:

> "I mean it's called a profession. But deep down inside I don't really believe it's a profession. I mean, I'm willing to play the professional game because there's just lots of layers to teaching, and, so to call it a profession, but I don't feel it's the same kind of thing that being a lawyer or doctor is. For starters, lawyers and doctors, you choose your clients, your clients have the power to choose you. And in teaching, those kids are stuck with me."

The impact of this participant's position will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Reflections on Effectiveness

The questions chosen to explore the participants' understanding of effectiveness were adapted from the Five Towns Questionnaire used in Dan Lortie's famous study <u>Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study</u>. They are among the same questions used by Lortie to explore an understanding of effectiveness. By talking about a good day in their classroom and about their goals for their teaching, participants inevitably addressed the outcomes they desired for their students and for themselves. They typically referenced their own involvement in the achievement of both the good day and their own as well as the students' accomplishments, leading to an understanding of their role in achieving both, i.e., their effectiveness. Open coding of these questions developed along the lines of similar categories traced throughout the responses rather than along the order of the questions themselves.

Questions related to effectiveness in the interview schedule were: *Every so often teachers talk about having a really good day in their teaching situation. Could*

you tell me what a good day is like for you? What happens? What kinds of things have you done to make it a good day? What have others possibly done to help make it a good day? What are you really trying to accomplish in your teaching situation? How do you tell whether or not you're accomplishing what you want to do in your teaching situation? What makes it difficult for you to be as effective as you want to be? Responses to the questions were remarkable in their consistency and were easily organized into two broad categories.

Characteristics of Effectiveness

Without exception, participants viewed themselves as **facilitators of process**. Their comments speak directly to the meaning of that category:

> "If I plan something new that I thought out well, and planned it well, introduced it to the children, told them that they needed to work together and then got out of their way, and stayed out of their way as much as possible, I think the best days are the days when I am less obvious... ."

> "...and I've been teaching for 15 or 16 years, I was really the director of what happened in my classroom. You know, I was in charge of everything and I stood up there and spewed out information. And it's so different now. You're facilitating it. It's real hard to step aside and let the kids take over. But when you do and you see them get the concepts from what you've set up, it's just a very powerful thing."

> "A good day is when, number one, when the bell rings and they don't want to leave your class."

> "This is the kids' class; it's not your class. The teacher isn't the main actor; you're the facilitator. I think if you facilitate instead of being the Academy Award winner up there, you just have a lot, you have many, many more great days than good days."

> "A good day would be one in which, if I've done something, a child will go to the library and find something more about what, that some child then brings in the next day... ."

"A real good day is probably when I think about it, an activity, I prepare it carefully, um, and it doesn't end there, it just takes off and it becomes something better than what I expected and, I found that what I taught and what I prepared and what I planned, it was actually very good and it just opened the doors to something else that happened that I hadn't foreseen but it was very welcome... ."

"...I can identify that feeling, and then, what that allows to happen is that I'm able to, to just work as a facilitator, organizing activities in the classroom where the kids can just come to me, get whatever assistance they need and then go back and do their own, and I'm able to, to float from one project to another as an overseer... ."

"Well, once you get into the flow, it's like a rhythm, you know, once you get into the flow and rhythm of the, of what's going on and the students are really participating. You just join right in and you just get into that wave and you just follow the wave."

"...it's hard, it's hard to stand back and let the kids do that but if I keep interjecting, then they're going to become more and more dependent on my judgment and I want to get them away from that. I want them to start internalizing that process."

"So, any way I can do to make them feel like they haven't worked and the day goes by like this, that's a good day when kids say, 'you mean it's time to go home already.' That's good."

"A good day for me, I come in, and I have an activity. And I present the activity. And all of a sudden, they take over. And the questions start flowing. And they get excited and they tell me, well you know, Mrs. [X], we could do it this way. Or, let's do a team project. And the, they take it over; they take it away. They take the ball and they run away with it."

While the learning process was clearly central to effectiveness in participant responses, with only one exception, transmission of academic content or skill in that process was not the primary goal that they sought to achieve. Rather, they assessed their effectiveness through their ability to act as **promoters of personal growth** in the students and in themselves. For example:

"Here at [X] it's a challenge to try to get the students to get to be as creative as possible...They're very fearful of the society we live in, like American society. It's hard for them to fathom it all at once. So their children reflect that and I'd like them to just open up more, you know. I think that's the real challenge for me to get them to do that."

"In my teaching situation, I'm trying to always consider the well-being of the children and the happiness of the children. I think the happiness of a person is just as important as the academic awareness of the person."

"So, I guess those happy faces and the kindness that's shown to each other, respect that's shown and offered to the other person. So, it's a give and take, a community-type feeling that's built within the classroom and you notice these things just starting to happen naturally, I think. Is what I look for and what I hope to see."

"Well, it sounds corny but it's not. But I want kids to have a vision of what they can be and what they can do. I want kids to know they can make a difference and I want them to learn that talent isn't necessarily being a straight-A student."

"I'm trying to teach these children how to be learners. And, at this point in my career, on an equal plane with that would be how to respect one another and respect other people. The longer I teach the more I'm convinced that what we're really teaching is the Golden Rule."

Several participants from urban school environments expressed their goals in even broader terms than the growth of their immediate classes or the ability of their students to be self-directed learners. For example:

"I am trying to make a better life for African-American people for the 21st century...So that's what I do as an educator, my task is, to make it so that there is an African-American community, it can be a viable community... ."

"...what I'm really trying to do is to make, to teach a generation that's totally independent, totally self-sufficient, and totally proud because I know that I can impart this to my kids... ."

<u>Supports and Obstacles</u>

Participants were more specific and consistent when detailing obstacles to their effectiveness than they were obstacles to their professionalism.

Collegiality was identified by almost every participant as influential in realizing their effectiveness. Once again, however, it was noted in its presence or absence, as was the case with collegiality as influential in maintaining professionalism. For example:

> "Well, I think, of course, it's sometimes difficult because we don't all come in with the same concerns. Not everyone cares as much about it as I do, I suppose. So the children come from other teachers, going to other teachers... ."

> "My good friends on the faculty, you know what's interesting. The good teachers, I hate to say that, but the teachers that still have interest in life and are innovative were extremely supportive."

> "And other teachers, too. Just talking to each other and, in the teachers' lounge, just, you know, what are you doing, and just interacting with each other. Caring."

> "We share. I have colleagues that, who are good friends and we share, and we say, oh look, I got this idea. It is terrific, it worked out beautifully, you know."

> "I think there are a lot of philosophical differences, different approaches to how you want to work with the children, so I can't really come here and expect to get the supports that I need to do the things that I want to do so it sort of puts me out on an island. You know, and I just have to sort of handle every detail of what it is that will make for success for the children myself."

A variety of situations over which participants had no control were cited as obstacles to effectiveness. For instance, **school environment** was regarded as both a

support and an obstacle to effectiveness. **Budgetary restrictions** rather than

individual salary and **bureaucratic infringement** were most frequently cited:

> "You know, I wish in the district you could start with a vision and then
> go on to the budget. But you're always starting with budget and then, doing
> what you can with the budget."

> "...sometimes monetary constraints...another constraint I have is the
> availability of supplies. Another constraint would be the inequality between
> suburban schools and urban inner city schools."

> "...well, the funding question around the country and in Illinois, it's
> just obscene. That's probably the biggest thing, you know, that teachers
> should have to be worrying about a piece of chalk or, I mean, literally a piece
> of chalk or paper, or you know, I mean, we should have, I should have an
> overhead in my room and I don't have one, you know...you don't just make
> people look for a resource. I spend outrageous amounts of money, just
> outrageous amounts of money, and that's not right."

> "Outside interruptions. Like, for example, when I'm having reading I
> would very much like to have thirty minutes. Is that too much to ask? Thirty
> minutes where the buzzers don't go off... ."

> "I think a lot of this testing. I don't think it's necessary. I don't know
> what it does... ."

> "I suppose school could be more effective if I had less children, and
> more help maybe in the classroom situation, maybe I could be more effective."

> "What makes it difficult? Well, I have a large number of students, that
> always makes it more difficult."

In keeping with the pattern already identified, participants were generally

more specific when identifying **societal influences** as an obstacle to effectiveness than

they were as an obstacle to professionalism, clearly another area over which teachers

have no control. However, the particular influences noted were different than those

mentioned with respect to professionalism. A lack of **parental support** and factors in

the general **home environment** were viewed as particularly problematic:

> "Parents don't listen to their children very often. And that shows. Parents have a lot of problems."

> "...things like way too much TV, way too much materialism, kids having seen it all, done it all, heard it all, thinking, you know, there's nothing new they can hear. Those kinds of things I think are, in general, corrode the effectiveness of the schools. Families that aren't functioning... ."

> "...a major one is children's life style. A lot of children come to school and they're tired and hungry even from middle class families."

> "...and I find the general climate of the culture maybe, you'd say, is such that we, that there's, what's valued is an immediate reactive dominating kind of response and that is counterproductive to my point of view, to what I trying to get across... ."

A specific obstacle to effectiveness mentioned in various forms by almost

every participant was **control of their day**. The immediate response of four

participants to what made it difficult for them to be as effective as they would like to

be was **lack of time**:

> "Yea, time is the major thing."

> "Lack of time. And, lack of time to prepare. I would love to have more time to prepare. If I, if I do something wonderful it would take a whole evening, you know, to prepare something for the following, and I am tired when I come home."

> "Time. Time and money...I think you are given a curriculum, you're expected to cover it. And there is not enough time to get all the science experiments in, all the, I don't see how any teacher can do it without interweaving the curriculum."

Building the Case

Having identified the characteristics of professionalism and effectiveness in the words of the study participants, construction of the case for a relationship between the two concepts is now possible. Figure 1 (p. 87) presents a starting point from which the primary relationships among the various characteristics can be traced and understood.

The Continuum of Work

Careful review of the three key terms used by participants to describe their work leads to the conclusion that the central phenomena under investigation in this study are the nature of work and its outcomes. In a broad sense, profession, occupation and vocation/calling should be regarded as various kinds of work, or in the theoretical sense, as categories of work. These terms in the three boxes on the left form a continuum of work. They are joined by arrows to show progression from left to right along the continuum, symbolizing movement from lesser to greater personal investment in work as described by participants.

Specific properties of work are listed above the continuum. Arrows pointing in either direction from the bracket enclosing the properties indicate the dimensional quality of these properties in the movement from lesser to greater personal investment.

For instance, **personal autonomy** or the recognition of one's ability to effect a situation was one of the most obvious properties of work signifying a difference

AUTONOMY
COMMITMENT
GRATIFICATION

PROMOTERS OF PERSONAL GROWTH
FACILITATORS OF PROCESS
CONTENT ORIENTATION

Personal Investment

Lesser ← → *Greater*

Scope of Goals

Narrow ← → *Broad*

WORK

OCCUPATION

PROFESSION

VOCATION
OR
CALLING

WORK
OUTCOMES

EFFECTIVENESS

TEACHING

Context

PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS
Standards for performance
Educational preparation
Continuing education

Personal Code of Behavior

Conditions

SUPPORTS/OBSTACLES
Collegiality
School environment
Societal influences

Conditions

SUPPORTS/OBSTACLES
Collegiality
Time
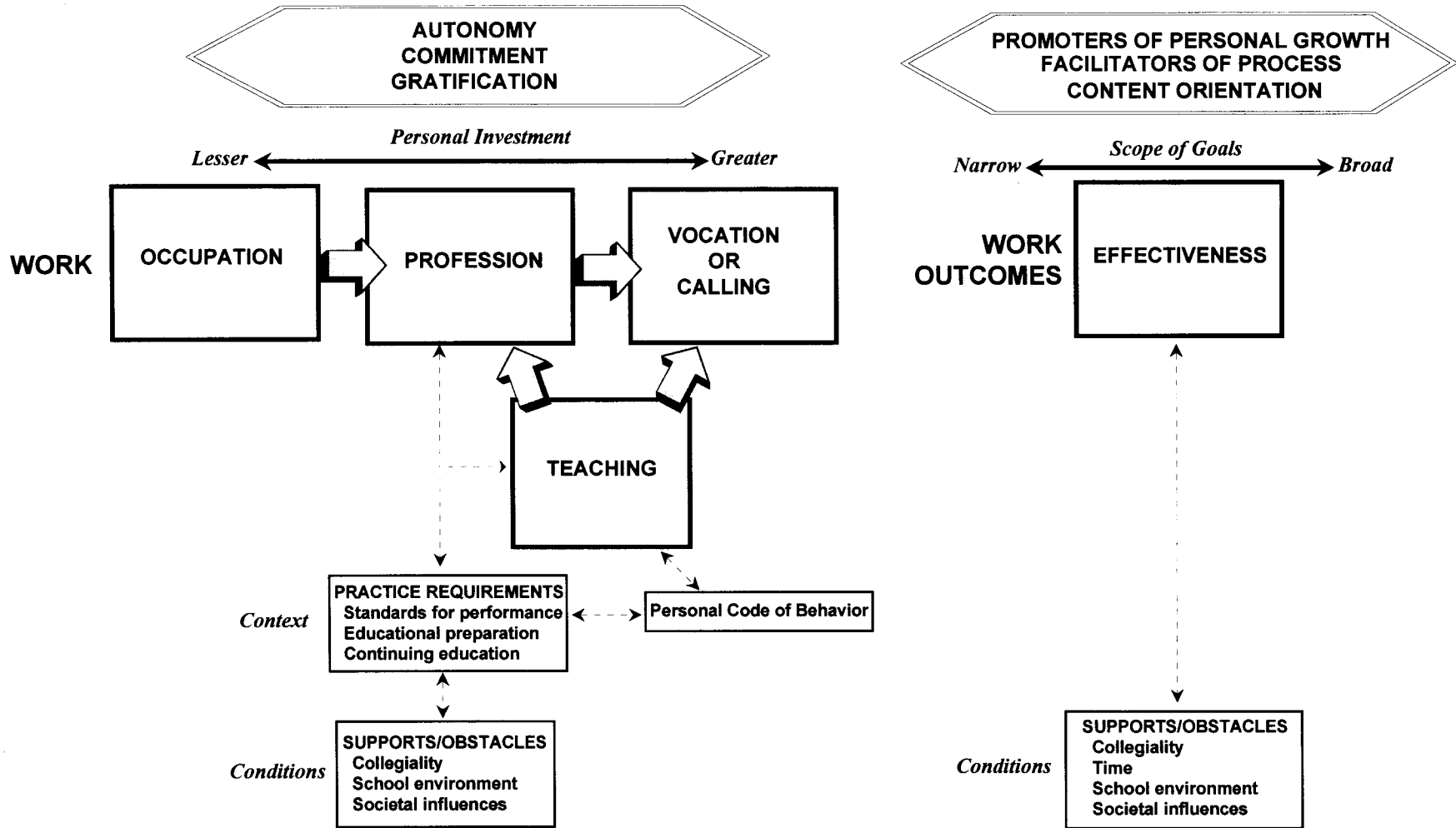School environment
Societal influences

Fig. 1. The continuum of work and work outcomes with a summary of dimensions and conditions suggested by
participants

between profession and occupation in the data. It is exemplified in the degree of personal freedom to which participants referred when they discussed the ability of professionals to change their work situation or to exercise creative action therein. That professionals exercise personal freedom to a greater degree than those involved in occupations is made clear in the following statements:

"If your occupation, and there's certainly nothing wrong with these occupations, but with an occupation, say an electrician. You go everyday and you look at your plans and you do the work prescribed in those plans and your job is finished. With a profession, you go everyday, not necessarily knowing what to expect. A doctor doesn't know what he's going to expect. A lawyer doesn't necessarily know how a case is going to turn out and a teacher certainly doesn't know that that classroom's going to be like everyday, no matter how well you think you know your kids. Things are changing. I think, I think, in a way, profession to me is more dealing with human beings, dealing with people. An occupation is more of going and doing something from a blueprint, or, or a prescribed list of this is what you must get done everyday. And I don't see a profession, especially the teaching profession, in those same terms."

"[i]n a profession, I can change the ground rules, and in an occupation I can't....And I can change what law means. I can change medicine. I can't change chemistry so chemistry can't be a profession."

The most powerful property of work indicating a difference in degree between occupation and profession was found in the category **personal commitment**. When placed in juxtaposition to one another, statements of participants provide dramatic examples of the dimensions inherent in this property, exemplified by differences in time commitment in an occupation and profession:

"...but I took it and I felt about it nevertheless as a job. You know, I would put in my time and I would just go home and I had my other life."

"A professional is one who, ah, is considered a 24-hour person."

"I think there is a difference between an occupation and between professionalism because I see an occupation as just something that you're putting your time in and getting the job done and, um, at whatever level you're up to that day for instance."

"Also, profession implies that you are working almost 24 hours, nevertheless, it's not like you're going to punch in a clock then you're finished up when you punch out. You're constantly thinking about issues whether or not you're actually doing some physical labor; you're engaged in thinking about problem solving for the job, whether or not you're in the office."

"You know, an occupation is, it's a job, it's something many people hold to make money."

"When I was a kid I remember hearing Margaret Meade say that...a job is something that you get paid to do and a profession is something that, that if all other things were equal, you'd pay someone else for the opportunity to do it. And, um, I think that, you know, that's how I see it."

Personal gratification, although not mentioned frequently by participants, was nonetheless a property with dimensional qualities on the continuum from occupation to profession.

As mentioned earlier, several participants used the terms vocation and calling when attempting to describe their understanding of profession in relationship to teaching. Placement of these two categories along the work continuum indicated a strong relationship to that of profession, extending beyond occupation in at least one participant's view. The same properties apply to vocation and/or calling as to profession, indicating the same or even greater personal investment. For that reason, vocation/calling was placed further to the right along the continuum to accommodate the following participant perspective:

"...you know, very much it's a calling. I don't even think of it as a profession. It's even more than that, it's a calling."

In most instances of their usage, however, vocation and calling seem to appear either beyond the control of the individual being "called" to a profession or within the control of the individual by virtue of response to a personal need. In either case, vocation and calling represent a greater degree of personal investment on the part of the individual than in occupation:

> "There's a calling, there's like a need that's been shaped up when you're a child inside of you. You just have this overwhelming feeling that you have to do this. This is something you have been called to. So, that's where I think the term profession comes in. You profess a love, it's like a hunger for doing this... ."

> "The only thing I can think of is a calling. You know, and you see it in ministry and you see it in people who become doctors and people who become social workers. They have an affinity for something. They do it well. And, they have a calling. And to me, that kind of fits in with professionalism."

While the continuum of work suggested by participant responses is unique insofar as it is grounded specifically in the responses of participants, it also reflects in broad strokes what theorists often employ as classification systems for occupations. In discussing one such classification system used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Grundy (1989) indicates:

> Rather than separate and disparate categories, this system can be interpreted as representing a continuum of human occupations. When regarded in this way, certain interesting trends are discernible which correspond to various conceptual analyses of human activity. Specifically it appears that as an occupation tends towards the '1' category [i.e., managers and administrators including legislators, judges, finance managers, farmers, shop managers, etc.] it will involve greater opportunities for autonomy and decision-making. The action

outcome is proactive and the style dynamic. On the other hand, as an occupation tends towards the '8' category [i.e., labourers and related workers including factory workers, agricultural labourers and cleaners], much less decision-making power is available and autonomy is prescriptive (meaning that instances where freedom of choice is possible are clearly explicated) (p. 81).

In the Australian classification referred to by Grundy, teachers as professionals are in the "2" category, as second from the highest grouping.

Conditions of Work

The dotted arrow moving in either direction between the category profession and practice requirements and supports/obstacles in Figure 1 designates the context and conditions under which the work of a profession occurs. To the context of professional work, participants ascribed the standards for performance and educational requirements of a profession; conditions for practice were mitigated by the supports and/or obstacles to professional practice in the environment (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 101-104). They applied the same context and conditions to profession in general as they did to teaching as a profession, with the latter being more specified.

The context and conditions of the professionalism of teaching described by participants reflected many of the traits reminiscent of the attribute approach to the study of profession discussed in Chapter II (see pp. 11-14). Attribute theory proposes the meaning of profession based on common traits among work groupings identified by society as having particular status. Proponents of greater professionalization for teachers use such traits against which to measure how teaching can or cannot be

regarded as a "true" profession. They also use attributes to measure environmental conditions which either support or work to the detriment of teaching practice.

"[A]dherence to a professional code of conduct" (Johnson, 1972, p. 23) was an attribute of profession suggested most often in the responses of participants. The data indicates that the context in which teachers teach is governed by **practice requirements** in the form of **standards of performance** and integrated into a **personal code of behavior** which mediates how participants conduct themselves in their professional role as teachers. The standards of performance reflected by this group of participants, however, were not reflected in a code of conduct developed by a professional organization as suggested in attribute theory. Instead, participants' behavior reflected an internalized code of conduct and failed to exhibit any connection with a code of ethics for teachers promulgated by a professional organization:

> "I see the professionalism as being sort of a code that determines my behavior in the classroom where I have to be very conscientious about how I interact with the children and stay disposed to them the whole time as opposed to giving them work to do and then going off in my corner or something like that. That's sort of a code of ethics that I define for myself... ."

As indicated earlier by the description of categories gleaned from the data, participants were more apt to reflect on their need for and participation in **continuing education** than on their educational preparation for teaching, probably an effect of the distance from their own training resulting from their years of experience. One participant's reference alluded to the particular attribute of profession as "skill based on theoretical knowledge" (Johnson, 1972, p. 23):

"So, I feel very secure in knowing things about children, what children need developmentally, how they grow and develop mentally, and, when I do sit down with a parent or when I sit down with someone and they ask me about teaching, I feel confident that I know some things and that they're interested in my telling them more if a parent needs to hear something. I'm confident that I can tell them."

Of special interest is the fact that issues important to proponents of greater professionalization for teachers such as attention to teachers' working conditions, provision of adequate compensation and efforts to lessen the infringement of bureaucratic structures (Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, 1993) were easily recognizable in participants' comments on **salary, support services,** and **bureaucracy** as obstacles to professionalism. Obstacles to professionalism were entirely out of control of participants. Participants were far more apt to describe the same obstacles in greater detail when discussing effectiveness.

On the other hand, **collegiality**, though considered a strong support of professionalism almost universally by participants, does not appear to correspond to that attribute identified as the tendency of professionals toward self-organization (Flexner, 1915). Participants appreciated the recognition and support they received through involvement in groups such as the Golden Apple Foundation and other professional organizations dedicated to the enhancement of teaching. They deeply valued the ability to interact with colleagues at their local school, and to some extent, in their broader social circles; they also recognized and appreciated support from school administrators, but they typically failed to mention such contact in any other context than in reference to their individual commitment to teaching and their

professionalism. Their responses provided minimal recognition of the profession as a corporate entity.

Participant thinking about profession failed to reflect findings of attribute theory regarding profession in one particularly noteworthy manner. Surprisingly little mention was made of specific skills which distinguish a professional and/or a teacher as a professional. Mention of these functions was made in context of describing rather than differentiating themselves from other types of less-than-professional workers and therefore not particularly related to any degree of differentiation of work along the continuum. Four of the 15 participants described specific functions of teaching such as:

> "how to maintain some sort of order...and how to pass along some pieces of information... ."

> "Lot of guidance and counseling, therapy...You know, because certain things, they just come up and you have to deal with them."

> "The key is being able to transmit, not just transmit information, but to put kids on the track of being able to discover that information for themselves also."

> "Curriculum development. Reflecting on the student progress, you know, evaluating students and planning, not just for the whole class, but looking at particular children, what their needs are and so how we will meet their needs."

Affirming Teaching as a Profession

It bespeaks the obvious to conclude that this particular sample of teachers regarded their work as a profession. With the one exception mentioned earlier, they were in agreement as to their professional identity, and whether their perceptions are

the result of acculturation in a society that organizes and describes work by means of certain roles or of their own reflections mediated by nothing more than their own experience, their comments generally reflect at least some aspects of the meaning of profession as outlined in traditional attribute theory. Their comments appear in keeping with thinking about professions and also reflect the findings of other researchers with respect to the meaning of teaching (Johnson, 1990; Nelson, 1993).

However, one critical element in the study data differentiates the meaning of profession and therefore professionalism from attribute or any theory that considers profession in terms of role and status. For these particular teachers, recognition of teaching as a profession and their identity as professionals as well as their behavior described as professionalism are all highly internalized perceptions on the part of participants themselves, tied directly to their individual identity.

Any of the approaches to the study of profession outlined earlier in this study are designed to analyze and characterize an occupational group from society's vantage point, that is, from the outside. This study is unique in that it attempted to capture not just the meaning attached to teaching by participants, but the meaning of teaching specifically as a profession. In doing so, it cannot be ignored that the meaning of profession for this group of teachers is mediated by their own investment in their work, not according to parameters structured by outside agencies, projects, or theorists. And, although, as shown earlier in this study, society fails to regard teachers as professionals, this group was undaunted in claiming that identity. Outside

factors acted as influences on, not determinants of the development and maintenance of that personal meaning.

To the degree that participants viewed themselves as invested in their work and saw their identity tied to their work they viewed themselves as professionals and their behavior as professionalism. Even the one participant who refused to accord the status of profession to teaching and characterized her own behavior as befitting one who is "called" to teach articulated the same properties and acknowledged the same context and conditions that mediated her effectiveness as did the participants who called themselves professionals. Therefore, her behavior resulting from her perception of her work reflected at least the same if not a greater degree of personal investment as that of the category profession.

With that being the case, discussion of this segment of the data may be summarized with the following definition of teaching. For these study participants, teaching is a profession, a category of work characterized by properties of personal autonomy, personal commitment reflected in a strong personal identity with the work itself, and a degree of personal gratification. These properties are reflected to a more significant degree as one moves toward greater personal investment along the work continuum. The context for teaching demands particular practice requirements involving standards for performance, educational preparation and the need for continuing education. The expected behavior or professionalism of teachers is grounded in a personal code of ethics, adherence to which is mediated through personal integrity rather than outside enforcement. External conditions mediated by

collegiality, the school environment, and societal influences present both supports and obstacles to professionalism and these influences, typically outside of the control of the individual professional, do not appear to have a direct impact on the actual maintenance of the participants' professional identity. Even when these conditions are absent, individuals view themselves functioning as professionals, although the presence of these factors creates a more supportive environment in which to work. In other words, these factors are necessary but not sufficient conditions.

The Dimensions of Effectiveness

As mentioned previously, the central phenomena under investigation in this study are the nature of work and its outcomes. Whereas work is represented by the three categories discussed above, work outcomes within the parameters of this study are represented by only one category, effectiveness (or effective outcomes). The characteristics or properties attributed by participants to themselves as effective teachers assumed dimensional qualities of effectiveness.

As described in the first section of this chapter, participant responses revealed amazing commonality surrounding issues of effectiveness. Participants almost universally measured their effectiveness by their ability to function in their teaching situation as **facilitators of process** and **promoters of personal growth**. In most cases, the process which participants facilitated was self-directed learning on the part of students, but the learning was frequently characterized not only by academics but also by unspecified activity such as in "the flow and rhythm...of what's going on" or "when the bell rings and they don't want to leave your class." The personal growth

which participants sought to promote involved students having "a vision of what they can be" or considering "the well-being of the children and the happiness of the children." As one participant remarked:

> "I think the happiness of a person is just as important as the academic awareness of the person."

Only one participant, in response to what it was she wanted to accomplish in her teaching situation, answered with a specific skill related to her particular subject area. Given the underlying assumption that all study participants were effective teachers, the problem of how to integrate that answer into the study findings became particularly problematic since it differed radically from the answers of the other 14 participants. Further analysis led to the conclusion that this participant's response also indicated effectiveness, but focused on a somewhat more narrowly conceived goal than did the rest of the sample. That focus was on specific skill-building; as facilitators of process, the other participants simply broadened the range of their goals to include a wider array of learning outcomes, typically unspecified. Recognizing the existence of this effectiveness continuum as a result of analyzing this single unique or negative case in the data was a significant insight during this investigation.

Beyond learning outcomes was the range of effective outcomes which broadened even further into the realm of personal growth on the part of the students. Thus, while not as highly categorized as the work continuum, there is nonetheless evidence of an effectiveness continuum the properties of which indicate movement from a narrower to a broader range of goals.

The Personal Investment Effect

How teachers view teaching and the teaching profession has a direct bearing on the type of teachers they are (Ornstein, 1990). This premise appears to be borne out in this study. In addition to the fact that they have all been recognized for their outstanding practice as recipients of the Golden Apple Award, the remarkable consistency of the thinking of this particular sample of teachers should also lend additional validity to their responses regarding their perception of the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness in their teaching practice. In their replies to the last question of the interview schedule, *We've now talked about both professionalism and effectiveness. How do these two ideas (hang together/connect) for you? (If they don't, why?)*, participants leave little doubt as to what relationship they perceived between the two concepts. With only one exception, all explicitly characterized their perception of the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness to be one of cause and effect. For them, professionalism is a sufficient condition for their conception of effectiveness when both concepts are understood in the manner recounted in this chapter. The following excerpts from the data depict the clarity and directness with which participants expressed their belief about the cause and effect relationship:

> "If I'm not effective in the classroom, then I'm not a professional. You know, that's how I view it. I think the two go hand in hand. And, for me to be effective, then I am a professional."

> "I really feel that if more teachers viewed themselves as professionals, their effectiveness in the classroom would be greater because, with that idea of professionalism you think of a code of ethics, responsibilities melt in there.

And when you build those two things in, you have a responsibility, a commitment, I think, you're going to be effective because you're going to be searching out what it means to be effective."

"Because as you feel about yourself, and as your children react to you as a person, as a professional, is how effective you are going to be."

"...effectiveness is facilitated and supported by professionalism. It's like the effectiveness is the goal and the professionalism is the thing that makes it happen."

"I guess my standards of being professional and judging whether or not I'd be effective were quite close and if they hadn't been I'd probably wouldn't be in, you know, in elementary teaching anyway."

"Professionalism and effectiveness is, ah, I think, one, it's like cause and effect, you know. If you, if you handle yourself professionally, there's very little room for you not to be effective."

The findings of this study illustrated in Figure 1 (see p. 87) offer some

affirmation of the participants' conclusion. 14 of the 15 teachers in the study viewed

themselves unequivocally as professionals. Even in the single case wherein the

participant insisted upon use of calling rather than profession to describe the work of

teaching, the same behaviors were still manifest in her discussion of professionalism.

Their description, including a significant amount of personal investment in their work

characterized by a high level of commitment, gratification, and autonomy places the

participants at middle point or to the far right along the work continuum. They

established similar characteristics for the context in which they worked as

professionals. The conditions under which they acted as professionals and under

which they attempted to engage in effective work outcomes were virtually the same.

The two significant properties of effectiveness extrapolated from the responses of the participants suggested dimensions of effectiveness which indicate placement also toward a mid or upper point along a range of goals represented in work outcomes. These broad goals, except in the case of the one participant which will be discussed later, generally involved desires for accomplishment that extended beyond immediate academic objectives characterized by content orientation or skill building. They dealt with broad learning processes on the part of the students and involved such concepts as "life-long learn[ing]" or "the response of the children" which point to not only the learning needs but the developmental needs of the student. Even further along the range of goals were those responses characterizing the participants' role as promoters of growth. This range of goals reflected altruistic and moral concerns on the part of participants, affecting the children's happiness and well-being, making a difference in the world or teaching the "Golden Rule." For all these participants, it appears that the degree to which they invested themselves in their work manifested itself in these broad goals which they set for themselves in their own classrooms.

Beyond illustrating the relationship between their own work and their work outcomes as one of cause and effect, participants offered little detail to substantiate their claims. We are left with the question of what it is about professionalism that could make it if not a sufficient condition then at least a necessary condition for effectiveness. With the advantage of having analyzed the responses, this researcher proposes the theory that the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness among this sample of teachers is what might be called the **personal investment**

effect. *As the participants invest themselves to a greater degree in their work, moving to the right along the work continuum, there occurs a movement in tandem along the work outcomes continuum, incorporating a full range of goals, broader than what might be reflected when less personal investment occurs at the left of the work continuum.* As these goals expand they become increasingly altruistic, moving from educationally-related outcomes to person-centered outcomes, the latter concentrating on the well-being of students, and even of the world-at-large.

Another approach by which to demonstrate the personal investment effect is to plot the relationships between the movement along both continua in a simple matrix loosely patterned on Robinson's work (1951) and found in Figure 2:

Personal Investment

	I	**i**
R	**RI** *I*	**Ri** *II*
r	**rl** *III*	**ri** *IV*

Range of Goals

Fig. 2. The Personal Investment Effect matrix

Movement along the work continuum characterized as personal investment is represented at the top of the matrix by upper-case "I" for the greater investment found in profession and vocation and/or calling. Lower-case "i" represents the degree of lesser investment noted by participants in describing occupation. Plotted along the left side of the matrix is the range of goals symbolized by upper-case "R" for the broader range of goals and lower-case "r" for the narrower range. The relationships represented in the individual quadrants of the matrix illustrate the findings of the study and offer further support for the personal investment effect.

Quadrant I, containing "RI" or a combination of greater personal investment and broad range of goals represents 14 of the 15 participants in this study. 13 of the 14 defined profession in the same manner and all 14 characterized their work-related behavior, or professionalism in corresponding fashion. The goals they set for themselves and their ability to accomplish them derive from the degree to which they identify with their work, that is, the degree of personal investment they have in their work, symbolized by the use of the term profession and professionalism.

The data does not account for the particular relationship represented in Quadrant II. An individual with a lesser degree of personal investment in her work and goals considered in the broader range might be exemplified by an altruistic electrician who has limited or no personal investment in her work but changes each electrical circuit for the good of electricians everywhere, the good of her clients or the good of the world. Although such a tradesperson is not impossible to imagine, such broad goals would not typically appear to be the result of actual investment in

work. Rather, they are probably due more to the basic goodness or humane orientation of the individual. The work investment drives the goals, not the other way around. It seems highly unlikely, though not impossible, that one would invest one's identity in conduits for the world!

Quadrant III portrays the one participant in the study sample who perceived herself as a professional in keeping with the definition ascribed to the entire study sample but whose particular characterization of effectiveness was narrow in scope, i.e., skill specific. If one accepts the principle that the investment drives the goals, then although one would expect a broader range of goals as one defines oneself as a professional, the full panoply of goal-oriented behavior appears open to this individual. What this particular quadrant indicates may be that the greater the degree of personal investment, the broader the entire range of goals from which one chooses to determine effectiveness.

Quadrant IV illustrates a relationship characterizing those who have little personal investment in their work and narrow or more focused goals. A suggestion of this type of individual was apparent in some of the participant references to occupation in responses to the first question in the interview schedule.

An understanding of the context and conditions of both work and work outcomes highlights the strength of the personal investment effect for the teacher participants in this study. In particular, standards of performance for profession evolved as a personal code of behavior for study participants. This code did not appear unduly influenced by obstacles considered conditions for practice. The

strength of the personal investment of participants was such that it could be maintained despite the impact of adverse conditions. Supportive conditions for professionalism in particular were far more critical to nurturing professional identity. However, ultimately, the identity with work was so strong that the overriding impression left was that its loss, though not mentioned in reference to themselves by any of the participants, would not be mediated through any outside circumstances. As one participant summed up this conviction:

> "My love of what I do. I guess that's one of my biggest supports. It comes from within."

Evidence of the personal investment effect and its alignment with professionalism is found in the literature. In her proposal for a new paradigm of educational practice to replace the conventional model of professionalism based on traditional attribute theory, Grundy (1989) uses the Greek concept of work to discuss notions of "Good" resulting from action. She distinguishes between various categories in the Australian classification system of occupations mentioned earlier by means of the concepts of *poiesis* and *praxis*. *Poiesis* is human activity in which "people [are] engaged in production whereby plans or specifications are transformed into products through the application of skill" (p. 82). On the other hand, *praxis* has as its end to achieve a morally acceptable, or "good" end through means which cannot be produced but can only be practiced. The means through which this practice occurs are governed by *phronesis* which "is not a method of determining what skills to apply to get something done. Rather it is concerned with what it is that ought to be

done" (p. 83). The "ought" provides the concept of professionalism with a normative rather than an empirical, measurable quality.

As noted earlier, participants seldom referred to the specific skills involved in teaching but spoke in normative terms regarding their practice as indicated in the following examples:

"We are looking at outcomes right now in school. And so, to me, that's so far-fetched because the children are, I mean, the response of the children is what I cherish. You know, so their willingness to come to school the next day and the enthusiasm with what they come to school and their feeling great."

"I want them to be responsible, good people. People that think more of more than just themselves. I want them to have a vision."

"I think you must be a good person and you must be aware of the importance of other people in the world, in your world or in the world. And, um, whether we paint that picture with kind words, nice deeds, it's important that they're good people, that they're happy, that, of course, they're learning academically, but that isn't the first thing of importance for me. The first thing is being a nice person."

In his attempt to characterize the essence of teacher professionalism, Sergiovanni (1992) proposes the concept of the "caring ethic...doing everything possible to serve the learning, developmental, and social needs of students as persons" (p. 53). His categories of personal needs resonate with what has already been identified along the work outcome continuum as the broader range of goals. Coupled with Grundy's use of the "Good" to describe practice, the word "ethic" also reflected in the comments of participants cited earlier, introduces the concept of a moral imperative inspiring teachers to act as they do.

Flores (1988) refers to this type of imperative as the practice of "professional virtue" (p. 4) and develops his understanding of this particular aspect of professionalism according to the Greek tradition of virtue as the moral goodness inherent in one's character. Professional virtue flows from an understanding of professionalism wherein the moral quality of one's person is equally if not more important than the performance of professional duties within a scope of practice. He further distinguishes the types of goods that derive from professional practice. Professional virtue engages in practice resulting in the attainment of internal goods, or "the noble ideals that should inspire practitioners to excel and be virtuous" (p. 10). External goods, such as fame or fortune, can also be products of professional practice, but they are not the ideal with which society has invested professional practice. Mention of external goods was nonexistent in the responses of participants regarding their own professionalism. The noble ideals that inspire participants to practice, reflecting their own perception of their work and the nature of the outcomes by which they assessed their effectiveness are well substantiated in the following remarks:

"I need to be, I want to think that I make a difference in what I do. What I do I need to think that I am making a difference in the lives of the children. And, to me that's very important because if I don't have that, on the days that I don't think that I am having that sense of making a difference, I am, it's like a let-down for me. I need the motivation of, I make a difference with the children."

"And this is what I think true professionalism is. If you're truly a professional, you're going to be the best that you can be. And whatever knowledge that you are able to gain, whatever skills that you learn, you should be readily anxious to share them with everyone. For the sake of the children."

"Because you have to be so dedicated. You know that you're not in it for the money. It takes a certain sincerity, a dedication. And it's something that you must prepare for, you're knowing that you're going, you're going against all kinds of obstacles. But yet, there's a, an insatiable desire to do it, to affect a difference, a change in the world."

"...professionalism I think, especially in this job, really any job, you have to really care about what you're doing, who you're with, give lots of thought to what would be best for that group of children or that child."

"And I don't do it by preaching or lecturing people about it, I just do it by doing my job the best I can when I can do it."

"Well...I think that I have certain internalized expectations of myself, responsibilities that I, that are my goals. That I want to achieve that, and that's why I'm in this profession because I want to achieve these goals, not that I have taken over a job that somebody's telling me what I have to do so that I can earn some money."

Perhaps what propels movement along the work continuum, what moves an individual to choose a particular category of work and invest fully in it from the start is the moral imperative implied in the concept of professional virtue. Keeping in mind the difficulties in defining profession and professionalism discussed in Chapter II, what appears critical is not so much what we call the work, profession or not, but the point at which the investment takes place. Profession has simply become the label used to identify those who appear further along the work continuum.

At an even deeper level, the moral imperative might actually account for our choice of work. When limitations, for whatever reason, impact the potential for that choice and the context and conditions are out of our control, the moral imperative, the nature of one's character might still allow a broad range of goals as in the case of the altruistic electrician. The personal investment effect, however, pertains only to work

itself. It seems to provide at least one possible explanation for the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness within the parameters of this study.

Summary

Responses of the study participants to the interview schedule subjected to several levels of coding analysis revealed unmistakable consistencies in their perceptions of both professionalism and effectiveness. The analysis revealed that this particular group of teachers identified profession as a category of work located at a point along the work continuum defined by a high degree of personal autonomy, commitment, and gratification. The work outcomes they sought to achieve were typically illustrative of a broader range of goals involving developmental and social needs of the students as well as their learning needs. The context in which teaching practice was maintained by participants was one conditioned by outside forces, but ultimately driven by their own strong sense of identity with their profession.

The personal investment effect was suggested as an explanation for how this group of teachers viewed the relationship between their professionalism and effectiveness. This effect can be summarized by stating that greater personal investment in one's work moves one further along the work continuum and results in greater movement along a continuum of work outcomes. Those teachers who identify with their work as a profession, a vocation, or a calling can be observed as striving for and achieving a full range of goals, but most often those which occupy the broader range involving developmental and social needs of students as well as specific learning needs. The moral imperative, or the drive resulting from one's basic moral

character was proposed as the motivating force behind one's investment of self in work.

Chapter V will draw conclusions of the findings detailed in this chapter, suggest implications for their application, and suggest possible areas for future study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Qualitative research often begins with the choice to interpret through demonstration rather than to verify through prediction. The former goal especially characterizes investigation by the grounded theory method. Traditional quantitative inquiry conceives a hypothesis in advance of data collection and analysis; qualitative research often first recognizes a given state-of-affairs and only then explains it through certain categories and conditions not theorized initially but developed in the course of the analysis itself. As a result, one might say that hypothesis formulation and testing in qualitative research is frequently, though not exclusively, postdictive rather than predictive (Miller, 1993, unpublished communication).

As discussed in Chapter II, little, if any, data exists to support and/or characterize the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness. Suggestions for a new model of teacher professionalism have been research-oriented (Dempsey, 1991) as well as theoretical (Grundy, 1989; Jackson, 1987). But this particular research project attempted to break new ground by investigating how practicing teachers themselves characterized their work of teaching, i.e., their professionalism, in relationship to their ability to formulate and achieve the outcomes they desired for their teaching. The project's central finding labeled the personal investment effect is

based on an analysis of the perceptions of one sample of teachers. As a grounded theory, it is also a postdictive hypothesis, attempting to explain the relationship between professionalism and effectiveness based on the experience with this particular group of study participants as the possibility of a relationship between the value one places on one's work and the goals one seeks to achieve. The discovery of this effect as well as of the meaning of professionalism and effectiveness understood by the study participants suggests certain conclusions as well as additional research questions which might serve to extend this preliminary investigation. The following sections detail these conclusions and possible areas of further interest.

<div align="center">Reflections on the Findings</div>

<div align="center">A Tool for Understanding</div>

One of the most significant conclusions drawn from this investigation involves the potential usefulness of the personal investment effect and, subsequently, offers some insight into the external validity or generalizability of the research itself. *The personal investment effect, as introduced in this study, should be seen as a tool for understanding rather than a measure for predicting effectiveness among teachers, and possibly, among workers in general.* Although the participants themselves perceived the relationship between their professionalism and their effectiveness to be one of cause and effect, there is reason to believe that such a characterization was somewhat oversimplistic.

The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis from which grounded theory derives its methodological approach has as its purpose to generate and suggest,

but not necessarily test, many properties about a general phenomenon (Glaser, 1965).

"The data are coded only enough to generate, hence, to suggest theory. Partial

testing of the theory, when necessary, is left to more rigorous, usually quantitative,

approaches which come later in the scientific enterprise" (p. 438).

At least at this point, the personal investment effect provides a plausible

explanation for the phenomenon under investigation in this study but it does not

appear yet to portray the sufficient causality necessary for predictive theory.

Robinson's matrix in Figure 2 (see p. 102) helps to clarify this point. According to

Robinson (1951), "[o]nly if we know that the phenomenon never fails to occur in the

presence of the conditions [Quadrant I], only if we know that the upper right cell in

the table contains a zero, can we predict the occurrence of the phenomenon from

[Quadrant I]" (p. 815).

In other words, prediction cannot occur when even one instance is proven

different from the central relationship illustrating the phenomenon symbolized in the

upper left-hand corner of the matrix or Quadrant I. In the case of the personal

investment effect, the strongest relationship between the greatest degree of personal

investment and the broadest range of goals, i.e., Quadrant I, RI, is not the only

relationship represented by the grounded theory present in the data. Other

possibilities exist, including the case of the one participant illustrated in Quadrant III.

At its incipient stage then, the value of the personal investment effect lies in its

potential ability to offer a plausible explanation for a situation when similar

categories, context, and conditions can be observed. It can help make sense of a

given situation (Maxwell, 1992). One would expect that such a situation will involve observation and/or study of other teachers in similar circumstances or provide grounds for further reflection in this area by proponents of greater professionalization for teachers. Later in this chapter, further research questions will be proposed through which both additional qualitative and eventually quantitative investigation could eventually strengthen the theoretical properties of the personal investment effect.

The Moral Imperative

A second conclusion drawn from this study involves the connotation of profession drawn from participant references to their work. As described in Chapter II, Hoyle (1980) suggested a dual purpose for the concept profession, i.e., to describe and to provide ideological connotation. It is readily apparent from this study that *participants used the terms profession and professionalism to portray a strong ideological orientation toward their work.*

In only two instances did participants refer to what might be called a generic description of profession by way of image or others' expectations:

> "I think you can look professional. You can put on your professional outfit. You can talk to other people and I've seen, you know, you've seen that in, in teaching. Even more so in higher education. Where these people put on these phoney façades of professionalism and are definitely ineffective teachers."

> "The same skills that I use to run my business are the same skills that I try to bring to the classroom and I try to get the children to understand these levels of professionalism so that they can have a different perspective of those things in general work."

The model of professionalism used by participants was highly personal and, as described at greater length in Chapter IV, distinguished by its behavioral and normative features. The following excerpts from the data present additional evidence of this fact:

> "I've always felt that my profession was teacher and with that word in mind, that it carried more responsibility."

> "These kids are limited only by my faith in their ability to learn. And I don't think there's anything they can't learn."

> "...I think that I have certain internalized expectations of myself, responsibilities that I, that are my goals. That I want to achieve that, and that's why I'm in this profession because I want to achieve these goals, not that I have taken over a job that somebody's telling me what I have to do so I can earn some money. That's professional."

> "...professionalism I think, especially in this job, really any job, you have to really care about what you're doing, who you're with, give lots of thought to what would be the best for that group of children or that child."

Participants used the words profession and professionalism to articulate how personal investment in their work shaped their goals and inspired their efforts to achieve them. Likewise, participants' description of effectiveness reflected their hopes for their students and their beliefs in what society needs from its schools. On a personal level, it seems participants' investment in their work is kindled by what was referred to earlier as a moral imperative or caring ethic. This value orientation, also referred to as professional virtue, was proposed as the impetus precipitating participants' investment in their work and facilitating their choices of work outcomes from among a broad range of goals. Noddings (1995) recently suggested that the moral purpose of caring for our children is precisely what is needed most in our

schools at this time. Given the level of investment in their work and the broad goals they have articulated, this particular group of teachers appears to believe in and attempt to carry out that moral purpose through their teaching. If the personal investment effect could eventually be useful in identifying perceptions of their work among other groups of educators, the altruism characteristic of a broader range of goals would point to appropriate candidates for accomplishing the transformation envisioned by Noddings.

On the other hand, we must be careful to avoid placing value judgements on our teachers and teacher candidates related to their "moral purpose." As indicated by the example of Noddings' work, our ideological purpose of schooling shapes our image of teaching. For those who view educational reform in terms of top-down communication of curriculum standards reminiscent of the labor image of teaching described in Chapter II , the altruistic personal development and social goals of most of the teachers in this study are at definite odds. The role of teaching eventually becomes an arena wherein debates involving curriculum standards, the presence of social programs in our schools, even issues of funding for public education often are conducted. How these debates reflect the thinking of our best teachers regarding their professionalism as exemplified in this study indeed is critical to the success of any education reform movement.

The Eye of the Beholder

As illustrated by the review of relevant literature in Chapter II, the meaning of profession varies according to the purpose for which it is intended as well as the

assumptions made about its definition and development. In many ways, "its meaning [becomes] appropriated by whichever party is claiming ownership" (Cameron, 1989, p. 86). Yet another conclusion that may be drawn from this study relates to the ownership of profession and professionalism by this group of teachers. *For this particular sample of practitioners, professionalism seems not a means to an end, but rather the end itself.*

"The power of words to affect our understanding and control our behavior cannot be considered separately from the wider cultural and historical context within which linguistic 'accretions' occur" (Cameron, 1989, p. 87). Proponents of greater professionalization add their particular accretions to the term profession resulting from their dissatisfaction with the low esteem with which teaching has been held during the history of its development in this country. They express their dissatisfaction with the often less-than-acceptable working conditions under which teachers must practice. These supporters of greater professionalization see improved professional status for teachers as a means to an end:

> Dare we be optimistic about defining and building a profession that the public might recognize and respect? The cards appear stacked against it. In spite of the vital connection between schools and our individual and collective welfare--argued so passionately and convincingly in educational reform reports--it is difficult to arouse much passion in the cause of school improvement. It is not surprising that it is equally difficult to create the belief that teaching is a high and noble calling to which our most able young citizens must be attracted and for which they must be rigorously prepared and well paid (Goodlad, 1990, pp. 14-15).

Sykes' (1989) description of professionalism as progress provides another

example of profession seen from the perspective of its supporters:

> Professionalism represents an effort to establish practice in the human
> services on a sound footing, to capitalize on and incorporate into
> practice a base of codified knowledge that progressively improves the
> work of the professional; and to represent in partnership with the
> modern state a regulatory framework of shared standards that protect
> public safety and welfare while advancing society's collective interest
> in material and spiritual well being (p. 254).

In opposition to supporters of greater professionalization for teaching,

Ginsburg (1988) represents those who maintain that the concept profession itself is

flawed. The "cultural accretions" to which these critical theorists are sensitive depict

an entirely different vision of profession and professionalism:

> The ideology of professionalism may in the immediate struggle help the
> cause, although in relation to other people's concurrent struggles and in
> one's own future struggles the one 'success' may translate into a major
> victory for those who would seek to benefit from the reproduction of
> unequal class and gender relations (p. 160).

For the critical theorists such as Ginsburg, profession is a means to a questionable

end in which an elitism engendered by professional status results in continued

oppressive class and gender distinctions.

The concept of profession was not without its critics among participants in the

study. One participant expressed a problem with the concept of profession in much

these same terms:

> "Ok. I have a problem with the word 'profession' because I think a lot
> of times it's an issue of snobbery more than it is of quality, of behavior. And,
> that partly comes from the fact that I, um, had done graduate work and then
> left graduate school and went and got a job as a, sort of an administrative
> assistant kind of person in a law firm library. And, and, and, there were

professionals who were the attorneys and all the rest of us just had jobs, some kind of occupations. And I really got allergic to the whole issue then. And then I, I don't like the way people, it seems like a class distinction many times to me. So, that's my problem with the issue, and yet, I think what those words are supposed to mean, there clearly is a difference between the way you feel about, you know, if I used many different labels I might be able to discuss the issues."

However, this same participant as noted in Chapter IV had no problem whatsoever discussing her professionalism.

The thinking of the participants in the study relative to profession and professionalism provides a unique perspective on the theoretical debate represented by the conflict between supporters of greater professionalization and critics of the same movement. A selection implying a different perspective on the category of autonomy, an attribute often credited to profession in theory provides an excellent example of the difference between the two:

Reshaping teachers' roles, responsibilities, and teaching conditions will ultimately require fundamental restructuring of schools-- the ways in which they make decisions, organize instruction, provide for collaborative planning and assessment of outcomes, and allocate authority for tasks ranging from personnel selection to program development and student assessment. Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993, p. 41)

"...that it's something that is such a deep part of who I am and what I do that, um, no national board of professional standards, you know, no certification team, um, there really isn't much that any other, that other people could do to convince me that I'm a professional. I know I'm a pro-, I know that I'm a teacher."

It is entirely plausible that this study might lead us is to the conclusion that participants might have used profession and professionalism to describe their work and their behavior for "want of better terms." The study was limited by the

difficulties inherent in discussing an ambiguous concept and therefore employed the terms occupation and profession to assist participants in their initial attempts at articulating their meaning. And, if professionalism for this one sample of practitioners, albeit a highly select one, is an end unto itself, we must ask ourselves how meaningful the "means to end" approach of proponents of greater professionalization is to the practitioners themselves. Or, on the other hand, how meaningful is the argument against professionalization? Perhaps what matters most in nurturing student teachers and sustaining practitioners is attention to the moral imperative which motivates excellent teachers to maintain personal investment in their work. Can training or ongoing education have any impact whatsoever on such investment?

Participant references to the conditions under which they found support for their professionalism and their effectiveness reflect many of the factors highlighted by proponents of professionalization as conditions in education which warrant significant improvement. However, the achievement of status and role aligned with greater professionalization and requiring these conditions be met does not appear at the heart of the meaning of their work as indicated by the study participants. Their choice of goals as well as their ability to achieve them is mediated through their personal investment in their work. As such, this choice constitutes the "end" to which their professionalism is directed.

Sufficient evidence from this one sample of teachers exists, therefore, to agree with those who suggest that a new model of teacher professionalism must be

developed. The process/structural approach to the development of professions outlined in Chapter II (see pp. 16-18) already provides the framework for such theorizing. Such a model must attend to not only the theoretical arguments for greater professionalization which stimulated this investigation originally, but the thinking of teachers represented by the research sample in this study. The issue is perhaps not so much one of the label we choose, but what model we actually develop to characterize what teachers do and how they do it.

Suggestions for Further Research and Reflection

The capability to ascertain conceptual categories constitutes the particular power of research on teaching "'from the inside'" (Elbaz, 1991). These increasingly more specific and/or new categories form a basis by which to examine ever more thoroughly the knowledge and meaning permeating teacher practice. The distinctive power of the categories related to the work of teaching and its outcomes yielded by this investigation can help to determine further applicability of the personal investment effect and formulate an additional platform from which to study the meaning of profession and professionalism.

Expanding the Current Study

Whether or not the personal investment effect can eventually be used to predict teacher effectiveness requires validation by replicating the study among different groups of teachers. It also demands investigation of the same problem conceptualized through methodologies other than the grounded theory approach used in this study.

For instance, the semi-structured interview schedule should be complemented by an unstructured interview format to eradicate any concerns that the original schedule biased the participants by setting up a dichotomy between profession and occupation. Both the unstructured format as well as continued use of the present schedule would also serve to expand the breadth and depth of the categories related to work and work outcomes in teaching.

In addition, although much more difficult to orchestrate, other ways to examine the thinking of various populations of teachers should be explored. Using a sample of teachers considered at-risk by virtue of poor performance would be a particularly good test of the validity of the personal investment effect. In so doing, one might consider whether it assists administrators to make sense of these teachers' attitudes toward work and goals. In addition, the interview schedule might also be used with teachers at various stages of their professional life cycle (Floden & Huberman, 1989) to determine whether or not the effect is sensitive at all to these cyclic patterns.

The personal investment effect is currently not appropriate for predicting either personal investment or effectiveness, or, ultimately, for characterizing teachers according to the results. However, additional qualitative studies might be complemented by quantitative instruments conceptualized according to the categories developed in the course of research. Such triangulation would provide further evidence of the validity of the effect and would serve to strengthen the theory itself.

On the other hand, perhaps further investigation will lead us to think not so much in terms of models of profession and professionalism but rather, to concentrate on the moral imperative which must be regarded as critical to what motivates at least some teachers to choose teaching as their life work. Serow, Eaker, and Forrest (1994) note this same issue in their study of the service ethic among teacher education students:

> With the appearance of a growing literature on the moral aspects of teachers' work, educational research has begun to keep pace with developments in other fields. This is not to suggest that intrinsic motives are universal among prospective teachers or that they necessarily override labor force conditions. Rather, the point is that any satisfactory understanding of the incentives for a teaching career must include not only the hard facts of the educational marketplace but also the ideals of those who want to teach (pp. 47-48).

The moral imperative and service ethic bring to mind the references made by the participants to teaching as their vocation and/or calling. Use of these terms by teachers requires further exploration. The words vocation and calling often seem to be used by teachers, perhaps more than other professionals. Why this is so constitutes an interesting question and one that must be approached carefully. In the past, the moral imperative or caring ethic, even the notion of vocation may erroneously have carried with them the image of self-sacrifice. This image translated into undermining efforts to strengthen funding for education, and particularly, increasing teacher salaries. A vocation to the caring ethic should be seen for what it is, life's work that places the well-being of individuals at the center of attention of the

worker. It commands respect and appropriate compensation, particularly when the individuals at the center of attention are the children of the nation.

At the most basic level, while studies on the development of teaching itself in the United States have provided us with a picture of its history, the research undertaken here underscores the problem of the ambiguity in how the work designated as profession, the individual as professional, and teaching behavior as professionalism are used in varying fashion in the literature. In much the same fashion as Cameron (1990) in her analysis of usage of these same terms in Scottish educational parlance, the need for such analysis of usage of these terms would be helpful for U. S. educators. The differences pointed to earlier between practicing teachers and researchers and policy analysts make this point critical. What problems arise when differences exist between the manner in which researchers and analysts on the one hand and practitioners on the other use such heavily value-laden terms? When the language of professionalism as progress (Sykes, 1989) does not match the normative language of the practitioner, how do we gain the investment of the practitioner? As education enters an era in which the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards attempts to gain credibility not only with the public but more importantly, among practitioners, this issue must be addressed.

<center>A Word on Expertise</center>

Although references to a knowledge base for teaching and the technical skills marking excellent practice were not apparent in the responses of the study participants, a word of caution as to the importance of these components in teaching

is in order. Absence of such references is not unique in the literature. In her

extensive analysis of teachers' stories, Nelson (1993) reflected on the same

phenomenon:

> The stories contain limited acknowledgements of the social, political,
> and historical contexts of education. There is almost no discussion of
> educational objectives or instructional technology. As their metaphors
> suggest, these teachers are more concerned with nurturing and
> connecting. (p 109)

The participants in this study were drawn exclusively from a prize-winning

sample of practitioners for reasons that have already been noted (see p. 56). One

could assume, then, that they have achieved a level of expertise characterized by

Doolittle and Yekovich (1994) as the "autonomous stage" in the development of the

cognitive skill inherent in expert knowledge. This point in the cognitive development

of expert knowledge describes a "continuous progression of improving the content

and structure of the declarative knowledge network, as well as increasing the

efficiency of the procedural knowledge productions" (p. 3). For the expert teachers

in this study, this autonomous stage may already be so natural as to not warrant

specific mention. However, the need for continuing education expressed by many of

the participants within the context of their teaching environment might be considered

the means by which they regarded their expert knowledge to be nurtured. Therefore,

it is critical that a new model of teacher professionalism, or teacher work behavior as

the case may be, include careful consideration of the development of the expert

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the means by which they regarded their expert knowledge to be nurtured. Therefore,

it is critical that a new model of teacher professionalism, or teacher work behavior as

the case may be, include careful consideration of the development of the expert

knowledge typically attributed to professionals. This issue is critical not only for teacher training programs, but also for the ongoing development of practicing teachers.

<center>Reprise</center>

By their support of greater professionalization for teachers, its proponents imply that improved professional status for teachers will have a positive impact on teaching practice and ultimately, on our educational system. In its broadest sense, therefore, the study of professionalism and its relationship to effectiveness should be considered part of the much larger body of scholarly work related to the study of teaching itself. This particular inquiry has underscored the fact that a number of areas related specifically to the meaning of profession and professionalism in teaching and its influence on practice leave much room for exploration.

Critics of this study might find reason to challenge its findings based on its highly select sample of practitioners. As noted in Chapter III, purposive samples are common in qualitative research. And in particular, since there was little baseline information from which to begin to understand the meaning of profession, professionalism and effectiveness from the perspective of teachers themselves, assumption of enhanced credibility based on this particular group's award-winning status was critical. This researcher adheres to the same position taken by Johnson (1990) in her selection of above-average teachers for her extensive study of teachers at work:

> My sample is intentionally drawn from above-average teachers. I believe
> it is worth carefully studying this group of teachers, because it is they,
> rather than those who are merely satisfactory, whose numbers should be

increased...it is these valued teachers whose continued presence in the profession is likely to attract others like them into teaching. They represent the strength of the profession. If we care about our schools, we must attend to their views and be informed by their insights (p. xxii).

At the heart of this study was the assumption that we care enough about our schools to consider whether teachers viewed as professionals can make a difference in improving the quality of education. But what makes a professional teacher? Is it society's view of teaching as work? Is it the individual teacher's view of his or her own work as a profession? We know society in general does not judge teaching to be a true profession and yet, we know of one particular sample of teachers for whom that characterization lacks potency because even in the absence of such recognition, they have defined themselves as professionals and they specified for themselves the meaning of their own effectiveness in their classrooms. We are left with the question of whether the meaning of profession and professionalism, proven ambiguous at best, is what really matters. In attempting to articulate this conundrum, one participant summarized her feelings thus:

> "I feel that training is part of it. But I feel that some people are just instinctively teachers. They just know how to do it. And that training helps them become, helps them refine what they do. I've had people that came out of colleges with straight A's in their practicum, all their coursework and couldn't teach. I really feel that it's like a gift."

Gifts must be nurtured. How we attempt to identify and cultivate the gift to teach in aspiring teachers and those already in practice should be the focus of teacher training and ongoing development. How we define profession and professionalism and, ultimately, the purpose of schooling, will provide direction to these efforts. The

manner in which we choose to answer these questions will be determined at least in part by our continued efforts to understand the complex association between the work and work outcomes of teaching, or as characterized in this study, the relationship between the professionalism and effectiveness of the teacher.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I want to thank you very much for consenting to be a participant in my study. The focus of my research is on the connection between professionalism and effectiveness and to explore those two concepts I'm going to ask you some questions. I'll be following my list of questions pretty closely. You should feel free to take as much time to think about them before answering as you might need...don't worry about the tape running.

I know how difficult it might be to put some of these answers into words...so just do your best...

1. Do you think there's a difference between calling work a profession or an occupation? Would you explain the difference as you see it?
2. Which term, occupation or profession, describes teaching for you personally? Why?
3. Do you feel a sense of professionalism with respect to your own teaching? (Pause) Would you describe what that means as best you can?

(Possible probe...Do you think of yourself as a professional? Why is that?)

4. What supports your sense of professionalism?
5. What works against your sense of professionalism?

(Now you're going to notice a change in my line of questioning...)

*6. Every so often teachers talk about having a really *good* day in their teaching situation. Could you tell me what a good day is like for you? What happens? (Pause) What kinds of things have you done to make it "a good day?" (Pause) What have others possibly done to help make it a good day?

*7. What are you really trying to accomplish in your teaching situation?
*8. How do you tell whether or not you're accomplishing what you want to do in your teaching situation?
9. What makes it difficult for you to be as effective as you want to be?

(We're on the home stretch now. This is my last question.)

10. We've now talked about both professionalism and effectiveness. How do these two ideas (hang together/connect) for you? (If they don't, why...)

Questions adapted from:
      Lortie, Dan C. <u>Schoolteacher: a sociological study</u>: "The Five Towns Interview Outline." Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1975.

APPENDIX B

AGREEMENT WITH GOLDEN APPLE FOUNDATION

LETTER OF AGREEMENT
FOR PARTICIPATION IN DOCTORAL RESEARCH

By virtue of the signatures appearing below, the parties listed agree to the following actions in support of the doctoral research of Patricia M. Surdyk:

The Golden Apple Awards Program will provide Patricia M. Surdyk with the names of 18 randomly selected Golden Apple Award winning elementary teachers (15 participants, 3 alternates, K through 8) to be enlisted as participants in research for her doctoral dissertation entitled "Professionalism and Effectiveness: A Grounded Theory Study of Teachers' Perceptions." The research represented by this doctoral dissertation has been approved by Loyola University Chicago and is under the direction of Mary Jane Gray, Ph.D., acting associate dean of the Graduate School and professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

The Golden Apple Awards Program will also provide Ms. Surdyk with a letter to accompany her initial request to each selected teacher attesting to the authenticity of her request and indicating the cooperation of the Awards Program in her research project.

The selected individuals will each be asked to participate in one semi-structured interview, not likely to exceed one hour in length.

Ms. Surdyk guarantees the anonymity of each participant in her findings. In addition, and in return for the cooperation of the Golden Apple Awards Program, she also agrees to provide the Golden Apple Awards Program and the Golden Apple Foundation with a completed copy of her dissertation and to participate, as requested by the Program and the Foundation, in activities related to the reporting of her findings.

Patricia M. Surdyk 5/3/94

Patricia M. Surdyk, Doctoral Candidate   Date
Loyola University Chicago
Graduate School

Meredith Harris 5/3/94

Meredith E. Harris, Director   Date
Golden Apple Awards Program

APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear ,

I'm writing to you as a Golden Apple award-winning teacher to ask your participation in my dissertation research.

My name is Pat Surdyk and I'm a candidate for my Ph.D. in Education at Loyola University Chicago. My research involves a study of teachers' attitudes toward various aspects of their work and award-winning teachers provide the most appropriate source of information for my particular research problem. The Golden Apple Awards Program has provided its assistance by supplying me with names of the elementary winners; your name was one selected in a random sample. Included with this letter is a signed agreement with the Golden Apple Awards Program which verifies the authenticity of my work and request.

Would you be willing to participate in an audio-taped interview lasting approximately 40 minutes to one hour? (The average time for pilot study interviews was 35 minutes.) No additional time either by way of preparation or follow-up is required, except a few minutes to complete a participant data sheet. The interview questions require only your personal reflections on certain aspects of teaching. At this time, I prefer not to give more detail about the study in order to maintain as much spontaneity as possible in participant responses. Anonymity of participants throughout the study is guaranteed and the results of the research will be reported to the Golden Apple Awards Program.

The particular research design for my study requires that interviews must be conducted in person. Therefore, if you agree to participate in my study, I want to make the process as convenient for you as possible by arranging a time and place of your preference. This includes your school or your home, any time of day, weekday or weekend. Since I am not under a great deal of time pressure, we can also wait until after the school year is complete; the choice will be up to you. I will call you within about one week in order to ascertain your willingness to participate and to arrange the logistics of an interview.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention. Even if you are unable to participate in my study, I appreciate your consideration of my request. Should you wish to contact me before I have a chance to call you, please feel free to do so. I can be reached at work (xx) or at home (xx). You can leave a message at either location.

I'm looking forward to speaking with you and, hopefully, to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Patricia M. Surdyk

Enclosure

APPENDIX D

AGREEMENT WITH PARTICIPANTS

LETTER OF AGREEMENT
FOR PARTICIPATION IN DOCTORAL RESEARCH

I, _____ agree to act as a participant in the
research of Patricia M. Surdyk for her doctoral dissertation entitled "Professionalism
and Effectiveness: A Grounded Theory Study of Teachers' Perceptions." The conduct
of this research has been approved by Loyola University Chicago.

I understand that my participation consists of one semi-structured, audio-taped
interview. I also understand that the signature of Ms. Surdyk below represents her
guarantee of my anonymity as a participant and that the transcripts of my interview will
contain no references by which I may be identified as a participant in her study.

_____   _____
(Participant)   Date

_____   _____
Patricia M. Surdyk, Doctoral Candidate   Date
Loyola University Chicago
Graduate School

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT DATA SHEET

PARTICIPANT DATA

Participant

Number of years teaching ☐

Indicate number of years per grade:

K ☐   5 ☐

1 ☐   6 ☐

2 ☐   7 ☐

3 ☐   8 ☐

4 ☐   9-12 ☐

Currently teaching in: *(choose one)*   **Number of years taught in:**

Public School ☐   Public School ☐

Private School *(religious)* ☐   Private School *(religious)* ☐

Private *(other)* ☐   Private *(other)* ☐

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VITA

Patricia Marie Surdyk was born in Hammond, Indiana on February 18, 1947, the only child of Dorothy M. and the late Joseph B. Surdyk. She holds a bachelor of science degree in education with highest honors from DePaul University, a master of arts degree in religious studies from Mundelein College, and a master of education degree in adult instructional management from Loyola University Chicago.

Ms. Surdyk began her career in education as an elementary and high school teacher for 12 years in schools of the Archdiocese of Chicago. She is certified by the state of Illinois for teaching kindergarten through ninth grade and for general administration in elementary and high school. She also spent six years in the private sector with the Chicago office of McKinsey & Company, Inc. an international management consultant firm. During that time she supervised the report production area and managed office operations.

Ms. Surdyk made her transition to her current work in medical education as research associate and later associate executive secretary with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). In both these capacities she supported the activities of several review committees responsible for accrediting graduate medical education training programs in particular medical specialties. Most notably at the ACGME, she was the first administrator of the Surgical Operative Log,

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy.

March 29, 1995
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